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DYING.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY ELLA WHEELER.

The great high arch of heaven, like tapestry
On ancient walls, was grandly colored, save
The quiet, cloudless West. That was a sea
Of purest crystal—golden wave on wave.
"Oh love," she whispered, "open wide the blind.
And let me see the glory of the West;
There, just across the sea, my soul will find
What here it never found—full peace and rest."

Deeper and darkling the bright clouds grew,
And red and amber streaks shot through the North;
The very light of Heaven was shining through
The crystal West. She reached her thin hand forth,
And a strange splendor fell upon her face,
And her dark eyes glowed with unearthly light.
I knew it came from God's celestial place
Where there is neither sorrow, death, nor night.

"Oh Love!" she cried, "my struggling spirit yearns
To leave this clay and go across the sea.
Look! how to molten gold the whole sky turns!
And see that white hand beckoning to me!
Ah Love, my Love! this is not death to go
At this sweet hour across the golden tide,
To drop my every grief, and henceforth know
Only the pleasures of the other side.

The angels took the tapestries away,
And filled them upon Heaven out of sight,
Leaving the common walls of sombre gray
To catch the dews and damp fogs of the night.
The West Wind played upon his dulcimer.
I leaned across the couch with bated breath;
Oh Love!" I said, as I gazed down on her,
"Surely thy words were true! this is not death."

Skale the Scout;

OR,

ON THE RED FRONTIERS.

An Indian Story of the Last War with England.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY BURR THORNBURY.

CHAPTER XXIV.

HURRAH!

ALFRED CARLETON IS THWARTED IN HIS VILLAINY BY THE SCOUTS. HIRAM SKALE ROSE UP AND WITH ONE TREMENDOUS BLOW LAID HIM SPRAWLING IN THE BOTTOM OF THE BOAT.

For hours Hiram Skale and his fair companion remained in their perilous perch, for the camp was still the scene of excitement, which seemed to increase rather than lessen. Could the firing of a single shot or the escape of a single prisoner, and that one a woman, be the cause of all this confusion? There was no discharge of firearms indicating an attack, and yet the commotion did not in the least abate. The scout began to conjecture other reasons for the uproar. It was near morning, and daylight would render the position of himself and Isabel hopelessly insecure, yet it would be folly to endeavor to reach the fort with so many of their enemies near and aroused.

"Begins to look mighty dubious, Miss Isabel," said Hiram, sadly. "It would be pretty hard to be taken again now, but that seems to be the prospect."

He had before informed her that her father was in safety. Now that the hope of meeting him grew so dim, and the fear of re-capture so great, the situation of the maiden was mournful indeed.

Hiram," she said in a gentle undertone that could be heard by him alone, "you have been a noble friend to me. I cannot express to you my gratitude; yet I have one more favor to beg—the last I shall ask of you. Will you grant it?"

"Name it, Miss Isabel," said the scout, with a foreboding of the meaning.

"It is that the moment we are discovered by our enemies you will in mercy take my life. It will be no sin, but a generous deed."

"Oh, Miss Isabel!"

"I cannot return to the hated spot from which I have escaped; to the hands of the wicked men who have persecuted me. Promise me all I ask, Hiram," said the poor girl in a pleading whisper.

"I cannot—I cannot"—was the reply of the agitated scout. "You may again escape, Miss Isabel, even if captured now. Remember, your father is at the fort; the Major may not be lost, and for their sake you must suffer all that may come upon you."

"But you do not know all, Hiram. Think of poor Liola."

"I *do* think of her," responded the noble fellow, and when you are safe, I will endeavor to rescue her."

"Alas! that the prospect of aiding her seems so remote," sighed Isabel.

Dawn was now beginning to faintly lighten the gloomy scene; the deeper darkness that precedes the day had passed.

"If it might only be so with ourselves," thought Skale, as he became sure that the strange gloom was giving way to morning.

Still the uproar continued, the cries of the Indians being most distinguishable.

"Are they raising the siege?" wondered Hiram, thinking of the news that Earnest Hallowell had brought to the fort. A sudden hope inspired him. If the enemy were indeed about to leave, another half hour of concealment might bring them safety. With intense anxiety he listened to the various sounds to be heard, endeavoring to determine what was indicated by them. In a few moments the tread of a body of men was distinguished, not distant. The scout knew at once by their close and regular movement that they were British troops, and not savages.

"They are coming this way," he whispered in a tremble of hope to his companion. "Don't think of giving up yet, Miss Isabel. *Those fellows are retreating.* If we can only remain here unseen for awhile longer our friends may come! Hark!"

A heavy, lumbering sound was heard slowly approaching.

"It is an artillery train!" exclaimed Skale, with almost imprudent loudness. "They are withdrawing their guns from the works this side the river at least. Hurrah."

Had Hiram felt it safe he would have given vent to most vociferous cheers. As it was he struggled with his enthusiasm, hardly able to repress it, though an exclamation would have in all probability brought them instant death.

The train of siege guns went slowly lumbering by over the rough forest road, opened by the troops when the cannon were first brought up.

Terrific yells from a distant body of Indians now reached the ears of the anxious listeners. Loud, excited and contentious voices were also heard. At length the sounds appeared to be dying away in the distance, and after a time could not be distinguished at all. The troops seemed to have passed, and sudden silence filled the forest, lately the scene of such commotion and excitement. It was now quite light.

"Hurrah!" exclaimed Hiram, almost aloud. "Hurrah, Miss Isabel, I believe we're safe!"

"Oh, Hiram! can it be?" cried our heroine, almost unnerved by the sudden revulsion of feeling from despair to hope.

"We must keep still awhile longer," replied Skale. "We must cheer and exclaim in whispers, though I do feel mighty like just breaking out. This is my opinion of matters, Miss Isabel. The Indians having been successful in slaughtering Dudley's men, have had enough of murder for the present, and according to their custom are going home. All Tecumseh's pleading and coaxing and threatening couldn't stop 'em. That's what the noise meant. They had a regular hullabaloo among themselves. The British weakened by the desertion of the redskins, have concluded it isn't prudent to stay this side of the river. I can't believe the siege is given up yet, but I do think we are saved by this happy chance."

"Oh, thank God," murmured Isabel. "If Earnest were only with us," she added with deep emotion.

"Yes," responded the scout; "but don't think of the worst, Miss Isabel. It's bad that the thing worked that way. We can't have all the luck. The Major is brave and keen, and I don't feel particularly anxious about him just yet. He was prepared for dodging, and will come out all right I hope."

"Oh, I hope so, and Liola—"

"And Liola, poor lady," said Hiram, "is had enough off no doubt, but we'll not forget her."

As the shrewd and cunning scout had conjectured, the Indians were indeed leaving for their villages. Despite the entreaties of Tecumseh they abandoned the British, who were thus left to conduct the siege alone.

The forest seemed now to be entirely deserted.

"I think it safe to descend, Miss Isabel, and we had best be going," said Hiram. "There is little danger of meeting any stragglers, for they know our own men will soon be on the ground. Well, I didn't expect to leave this tree alive; I was never treed so but once before. This big pine has served us well. Bless you, old tree. Come, Miss Isabel, let us leave our strange prison."

He assisted her to descend. Profoundly grateful for their preservation, they immediately pressed on toward the spot where the two scouts had been left. They had gone but a few rods when a warning gesture from Hiram caused Isabel to sink down behind a sheltering bush. She then waited anxiously for a few minutes while her companion carefully reconnoitered the vicinity of supposed danger. He did not go far from her side, but peered cautiously through the thickets in the direction from which the alarm had come. Soon the maiden saw a bright and joyous look come into the bronzed face she was watching. He glanced toward her with an encouraging smile, and then stood boldly up and shouted:

"Hurrah!" This time with nearly the full power of his lungs.

"Hurrah!" was heard in answer.

Returning to Isabel and taking her by the arm he brought her to the point where he had stood, and before them she saw advancing the forms of the gallant scouts.

"This way," cried Hiram. "No ambush here."

They came up and were joyously greeted. Glad was the maiden to see her friends, and glad were they to see her.

"Lord bless ye, Miss Isabel," cried Tom Williams, "but I'm powerful pleased to see ye. Whar's the Major, Hiram!"

A cloud, passing over the faces of Skale and Isabel, was a silent answer to the question.

"He arn't a goner, I hopes," said the borderer.

"No; that is I don't believe he's harmed," answered Hiram; "but we lost him, Tom, and that's all we know about him."

The facts of his disappearance were briefly stated. Tom gave a long, wailing whistle, expressive of his regret that the young man had not been so fortunate as the others.

"Bad, bad," muttered he. "We had better be makin' for the fort straight," he continued. "Thar's no tellin' what may turn up. Our fellers are thick further back, though, but mighty keerful. They remember what happened to Dudley's men."

The little party hastened on, falling in soon with a party of soldiers from the fort, by whom they were conducted to a point on the river where boats were to be found. They crossed the stream and were soon within the works.

Colonel Westburn, who was anxiously waiting and watching, had descried the boat, and was in a fever of impatience to know the result of the dangerous venture. He recognised the form of his daughter.

"She is saved! she is saved!" was the cry of the happy father.

They were soon in each other's arms—they who had parted amid such peril, who had passed through such dangers, were together and in safety once more.

We will not attempt to picture that joyful meeting, though its gladness was lessened by the thought that Earnest might not return to them. It was a dark, distracting thought, but the hope of his final safety arose. They had learned to hope even in the hour of deepest gloom.

Milly rejoiced to see her young mistress again—and related with much animation, when they were alone, the history of her marriage with Tom Williams, and the latter's awkward courtship.

"The gallant fellow!" said Isabel. "Be a good wife to him, Milly, for there are no truer hearts than Tom's."

She thought of one as true—of Earnest—and she sighed and trembled, as she reflected how great at that moment might be his peril.

"So near to him—so near to him, and then such cruel disappointment," she murmured. And Milly, knowing well the cause of her shadowed brow, sighed in sympathy, thinking how she would feel if her Tom were in the other soldier-lover's place.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE MAJOR'S ADVENTURES.

Major Hallowell, being left by Skale while the latter went to attempt the liberation of Isabel Westburn, waited in the most torturing anxiety for the return of the scout. The time seemed almost like an eternity.

"Will he never come?" queried the young man. "I am impatient; I must be calm. Yet so much depends upon the success of Hiram's efforts, that I tremble in spite of myself. This suspense is worse than any activity, however perilous."

His reflections were cut short by the approach of three or four private soldiers under the charge of an apparently intoxicated corporal. There had perhaps been some trouble on the picket line, and these men were being conducted in under guard. A very inefficient guard it was—but they went decorously along, notwithstanding. The soldiers seemed to be making an earnest but respectful protest against the treatment they were receiving, but the corporal only ordered them, in a maudlin tone, to "step along."

The party were approaching very directly the spot where the young man was. It was their evident intention to cross the hollow on their way to their destination. Fearing that he could not escape the observation of so many eyes, he resolved, being in British uniform, to stand boldly up, without endeavoring to conceal himself. The men saw him, and one of those under guard cried—

"There's Major Butterworth now, boys. Let's appeal to him."

The corporal became immediately respectful, and not a little sobered. Our hero saw that it was a case of mistaken identity, and not being able to help himself, assumed the character of "Major Butterworth" at once. Keeping his face as much in the shadow as possible—a camp-fire threw its long gleam across the scene—a camp-fire lately supplied with fresh fuel, as it was almost smouldered out when Earnest first took his position near—he ordered the men to move on, saying that their case should have his immediate attention. He feared that the tones of his voice might be so different from those of the real Major Butterworth's that the men would discover their mistake. But they appeared to suspect nothing. He permitted the corporal to lead the way, not knowing himself in which direction the quarters of the guard lay.

The men expressed themselves highly pleased with the Major's readiness to attend to their case at that hour of night.

"We don't want to appear disgraced at morning, sir," said one.

"It shall all be right," assured the officer.

"Private Bellass there," interposed the corporal, "is the worst one of the three. Refused to—"

"Silence," ordered Major Hallowell, fearing to be drawn into the necessity of replying to the garrulous man at greater length.

"I must leave this party, and that very soon," he reflected. "The light of a second camp-fire may reveal my features and show the men their mistake. It is hardly possible that I so much resemble the real Major Butterworth. It is probably my form more than my face that misleads them. What if Hiram has returned by this time? and Isabel with him! They will find that I have gone!"

The little party were passing the shadowed corner of a large square tent that from its appearance might form the quarters of the guard. Permitting the others to precede him, when they had turned the angle our hero quietly slipped away, leaving them to wonder at his sudden and mysterious disappearance. He hastened to the spot he had left. The camp-fire still burned brightly, but no one was visible. Had Hiram returned? or was he still to be waited for? Earnest could only conjecture. "It will not do to remain here long," he said.

"The time is passing rapidly, and I must take it for granted that Skale, during my absence, returned—Isabel with him I fondly hope!—and finding me not here, has attempted to repass the lines."

Now, as it happened, the scout and Isabel had almost at the moment of Major Hallowell's approach, disappeared from view down the hollow. A pause of a very brief period would have enabled the young man to join them. But as we know they feared to delay, with such possibilities of danger behind them. Had Earnest been a few seconds earlier, he would have escaped in company with his betrothed. Life is full of such accidents—some fortunate, some otherwise. A single step to the right or to the left—a pause of a few moments, or a quickened footstep—results to our happiness or our misery. If we could only know which to make! Ah! if we could only know how happily different it might often be!

"I will go toward the marquee," thought the Major, "before I abandon the hope of meeting them. There has been no outcry—no alarm; Hiram has either been successful or else he has not ventured fully yet. I will go to the tents to determine if he is yet outside. The uniform I wear will be a protection. Oh, if I could only feel that Isabel has been rescued!"

He advanced without concealment in the direction of the line of marquees, hoping, if seen, that he would be taken for an officer going the rounds to ascertain if all was right. But he had hardly gone a rod before the alarm that had been heard by Hiram and his fair companion was given. The same musket shot from the front fell with startling loudness upon his ears. All around him was confusion in an instant. The centre of the excitement appeared to be the vicinity of the marquees mentioned. Men were hurrying thither from every quarter, and trusting to his uniform as a disguise, he also approached. Lights were flaring and gleaming about. The half-breed squaw, bound and gagged, was discovered, and great was the wonder and alarm. Col. Alfred Carleton hastened from his tent to that which had been the prison of Isabel Westburn.

"The girl gone!" he exclaimed, angrily. "Whose work is this? Speak, Mokado; tell me all!"

"Isabel has escaped then!" thought Earnest, with secret rapture, as mingling with the throng gathered around, he heard the Colonel's words. "My own position is dubious and alarming; but *she*, I trust, will reach a spot of safety.

In reply to Carleton's excited demand, the half-breed, in the Indian tongue, gave a confused and unsatisfactory explanation of the affair. The Colonel turned away with a gesture of contempt and impatience.

"Little is to be learned from her," he cried. "The prisoner is gone, and her release is doubtless the work of some of the enemy's secret agents. They shall be hung instantly if apprehended."

The Major trembled slightly as he heard these words.

"If I am detected I am lost," he thought. "I must look sharply to my chances, and be outside of this camp before morning."

"There is a disturbance toward the front," continued the Colonel. "The intruders may have been discovered; but the camp must be searched."

He gave a few brief, rapid orders, and then turned toward his own tent, muttering, "I must look to Liola; she may have friends near that I suspect not. Skale is dead, or I should fear him. I would rather manage a whole tribe of Indians, and command an army besides, than attempt the subjection of a woman. But Liola shall not escape me," he concluded, with a compression of the lips and a grinding of the teeth.

The confusion grew louder and louder.

"What can be the meaning of all this uproar?" he wondered to himself, as the disturbance increased. "I must have an explanation. There can be no attack. Ah! Marion, is that you."

A man—one of the Colonel's subordinates—approached.

"What is the meaning of this strange commotion?" he asked of the new comer. They had paused by the side of a camp-fire.

"The Indians are leaving, sir—deserting—and Tecumseh himself cannot prevent them."

"Just as I expected," responded the officer. "We are unfortunate, Marion. Is the General on this side of the river?"

"No, sir; but Tecumseh is."

Carleton directed the man to proceed to the scene of the tumult and learn if the general-in-command were there. He then entered his marquee.

Major Hallowell knew not what to do. Whether to try at once to get through the lines or to wait awhile for new developments. He decided to attempt the former. He started toward the front, but unfortunately his passage was soon interrupted by the thick and tangled nature of the bushes and the softness of the soil. In a few seconds, as he was attempting, in spite of the difficulties, to proceed, he found himself a little in doubt as to the course to be pursued. He struggled on, and in a short time reached drier ground.

"If I should be captured in this uniform," he reflected, "I will be treated as a spy. It has served my purpose well. Better to be taken, if at all, in my proper garb."

He divested himself of the coat and pantaloons which he had worn over his own uniform, saying as he cast the dangerous trappings aside:

"There! I am an American major now. If I become a prisoner it will be in my true character, and the hazard of being treated as a spy will be greatly lessened."

Continuing on his way, to his disgust he soon plunged into another morass. Again he succeeded in reaching a more secure footing, but just as he was silently congratulating himself on this, a slight noise in the bushes to his right alarmed him. Something touched his hand; he looked down, but instantly the other was seized, and he was thrown violently to the earth.

A blow on his head delivered by no sparing hand stunned him so that he knew nothing of what followed.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE TRUCE ON THE RAISIN.

The British had been deserted by their savage allies. The losses of the besiegers had been very serious, and still the fort held out. At a council of war called by General Proctor immediately after he learned of the defection of the savages, it was decided to propose a cessation of hostilities and an exchange of prisoners. This was agreed to by the brave defenders of Meigs, and accordingly the exchange was effected. Among those thus restored to freedom were Captain Morris and his men.

The gallant old sailor rejoiced greatly at this unexpected deliverance, not only for his own sake, but for that of his comrades, especially brave but desponding Will Bunting. From the circumstances of their capture and the manner in which they had been held, the Captain had a secret fear of treatment worse then that extended to the regular prisoners of war. He was afraid that himself and men would be regarded as the special captives of the Indians. Great, therefore, was his joy when they knew that they were to be included among the others.

We will not attempt a description of their meeting with those from whom they had parted in that terrible tempest on the lake. Mutual congratulations were offered, mutual explanations made, and the story of their sufferings and adventures rehearsed. Their dangers were not yet entirely passed, as will be seen, but they rejoiced in their present safety, and marvelled that they had survived so many perils. Their joy was dimmed by the thought of their comrades known to have perished, and of him whose fate rested in obscurity—the young Major. He came not with the exchanged men. The sorrow of Isabel, her father, the Captain, of all was great.

"Earnest and Liola yet away," sighed the fair daughter of Colonel Westburn. "If they were only with us, how complete our joy would be, save our grief for those who fell in the forest—poor Mr. Ashton and the others."

"The Major shall be found, Miss Isabel," said Hiram Skale, already planning rescue. "He must be a prisoner, held, perhaps, as a spy, he thought to himself, but not to be despaired of. Tom Williams and myself can find him if he's in the Northwest." His words were most cheering to the sad girl.

"Count me in when you start on that ar tramp," spoke up old Simon Brace, fully recovered from his wounds, and ready for any daring enterprise. He could not rest easy while a single member of the party that had been wrecked on the Helicon remained in danger.

Hiram Skale regretted on one account that the savages had retired—he feared he should never hear or see more of the generous chief, White Wolf. Perhaps we should not express it thus, for he did not regret that the force of the besiegers was thus weakened; he only experienced a strange feeling of disappointment as he reflected that the mysterious young sachem would probably never be met again. Often and often in his mind arose the vision of the warrior, and his first yearning to know more of him only strengthened.

The truce was at an end. Would active hostilities be resumed by the enemy, or would they abandon the siege entirely? Thus queried the garrison of Fort Meigs as they prepared themselves for the worst.

Skale, Brace, Williams and Wisner were again on the war path. They desired to ascertain the fate of Major Hallowell and to rescue him if found alive. General Harrison had also commissioned them to obtain information, if possible, of the immediate intentions of Proctor.

The scouts, on reaching what had been the camping ground of the British, found the army in full retreat.

"Gone!" cried Skale, in a tone of disappointment. "Gone! and the Major and the young lady with 'em. This is good news for the General, but I don't know what will become of our two friends. If we could only lay our hands on that scoundrel, Carleton, I'd rest easier for the girl's sake. If we could only catch him, I say, boys."

"The bloody agent, do you mean, Hiram?" asked Tom Williams."

"The one that sent me out to be tomahawked, Tom; the villain that calls himself the husband of the young lady."

"Kin we do it, Hiram?"

"Doubtful, I think; but what *shall* we do?"

"Foller the red-coats clar to Malden, if they goes so fur."

"There's but little that's impossible, I've found," said Skale, "if we make up our minds to do it and watch close for chances. And since we're bent on helping our friends, or finding that they're past help, let us keep on the track of this flying horde."

"We kin soon overtake 'em ef we tries," asserted Simon Brace, "and may some time grab this Colonel you speak of, Hiram, when he thinks he's safe as Proctor himself."

The determination of the scouts was, therefore, to follow the retreating army, hang about it and act as circumstances might decide. It would be perilous and exciting work—just what the borderers liked. They might in some way obtain information of the numbers and future movements of the enemy, that might be of incalculable benefit to their countrymen, and they might also be of service to the Major and Liola.

The hostile army was followed until the banks of the river Raisin were reached. The British had not yet crossed, though they were making vigorous preparations to do so. The weather for the season had been extremely warm. Sudden summer burned over the great forest, though the shade did not permit the fierceness of the sun's rays to be felt. Nevertheless the air was sultry and oppressive. A storm seemed brewing. A large black breadth of cloud appeared in the western sky, and the blue of the uncovered portion was slowly changing to a misty gray, as if the air were charged with moisture. Ever since the break of day the peculiarly still and murky condition of the atmosphere had been noticed. The distant mass of clouds was played across by the lightning, and the thunder rolled ominously. The British commander was excited at the prospect of having the stream before him swollen to an impassable size; and yet he was not quite ready to cross, the artillery not having all come up. The work of dragging the guns over the rough army trails, that could hardly be called roads, was a slow and difficult one.

Meanwhile the storm was spreading on every hand. It had assumed the form of a tempest, and came roaring through the forest with a tremendous power. This was its first fury, and was soon exhausted. Then followed a steady deluge of rain; the wind subsided, but the water poured from the sky in unremitting flow. The Raisin rose rapidly, and but few of the troops succeeded in reaching the northern bank. The sultry heat had passed away, and a chill began to pervade the air. The wind that with a softened touch had blown from southern Michigan, turned and beat steadily in from stormy Erie. And so the day wore on. Toward evening the rain abated, and orders were issued to cross the stream, if it subsided sufficiently, at early daylight. The waters, which had risen with extraordinary rapidity, went quickly down, and when the first dim light of dawn was seen the troops essayed the passage of the river.

Taking advantage of the gloom of the storm, our friends, the scouts, who had been hanging closely upon the skirts of the army, boldly entered it, each in an appropriate disguise. Skale advocated this daring movement, for he hoped that during the confusion of crossing the river some opportunity might arise for successful action in favor of the supposed prisoners. The risk of being detected was not really very great, for the army thronged with scouts employed by the British—Canadian hunters chiefly—half-breeds, *habitans*, and the various characters which are usually to be found in the vicinity of a body of troops engaged in a campaign. Mingling with these, and acting well their assumed part, the four Americans did not seriously apprehend the discovery of their true character.

Hiram Skale, with his usual audacity, had, during the height of the tempest, penetrated into the very centre of the camp, and assured himself by certain evidences of the whereabouts of Liola. He caught a glimpse of Colonel Carleton, and marked in his mind the locality of the tent in which the fair captive was confined. He then returned to his companions and informed them of his proposed plan. A very bold one it was.

All night Skale remained near the tent containing the prisoner. He caught not a single view of her, yet he felt sure that she was there.

In accordance with orders issued the previous evening, by earliest twilight the troops were astir. The wind that during the night had blown with considerable vehemence had fallen, and a chilly mist hung over the river. This Hiram Skale noticed with the utmost satisfaction.

One regiment of the British was passing over, and in the rear of this Colonel Alfred Carleton prepared to follow. A canoe, large enough to hold four or five persons, was, by his direction, held in readiness on the shore. The Colonel appeared, carefully conducting his prisoner to the boat. Her slight figure drooping as if in despair, could be dimly seen by her unknown and watching friends, as by the side of her persecutor she passed along. By a bit of stratagem the man who was in charge of the canoe, and who was to have been one of the oarsmen, was momentarily called away. Tom Williams did this, and so very neatly that the fellow was easily duped.

"Would ye step to the Gineral's tent a moment," said Tom. "Yer man arn't comin' jest yet, and he told me ye wouldn't be wanted for five minutes."

Wondering what "the General" could want of him, yet thinking of a few additional pieces of gold as a reward for some service, the boatman followed Tom from the shore.

Carleton appeared by the time they were out of sight, and seeing no one in the boat, grew instantly impatient.

"Where are the oarsmen?" he demanded. "We cannot wait a moment on this dismal shore."

"Here sir," responded Hiram Skale and Simon Brace, stepping with alacrity into the canoe. The former took good care to disguise his voice, though there was little danger of the man suspecting him at that time and place. Hiram was thought to be safely dead.

The Colonel and the captive Liola were seated. How little the latter dreamed of the real character of the pretended boatmen!

"Hasten, men," urged Carleton. "I should have crossed last night, but the storm delayed me."

The scouts secretly blessed the storm.

"We're the men fur ye, Gineral," said old Simon, purposely mistaking the rank of the officer. "It's a short distance across the Raisin, provided we goes straight."

The tone of the scout was very significant.

The canoe shot from the shore, and with a mighty exultation in their bosoms, the two daring fellows exchanged quick, triumphant glances. They reached the middle of the stream. On the northern bank the regiment that had preceded them was landing, heard, but unseen in the mist. No other boats had left the other shore with them. They were alone with the man who was secretly congratulating himself on his successful villainy—alone save the presence of the fair young prisoner who guessed not friends were so near, sad and silent she sat—satisfied and silent his expression—triumphant and silent the scouts.

CHAPTER XXVII.

STRANGE EXPERIENCES.

When Earnest Hallowell revived he found himself amid surroundings very different from those he had last remembered. He recalled, dimly and confusedly, the events that had preceded the sudden attack upon himself—his attempted departure from the British camp—the confusion his divesting himself of the disguising uniform—his bewilderment in the swamp, and lastly the heavy blow that had laid him senseless.

He opened his eyes expecting to find himself—if in his bewildered state of mind he expected anything—a prisoner in the enemy's camp; a prisoner, whose return to consciousness was awaited, perhaps, that he might be hung as a spy. He looked excitedly around him. No evidence of a civilized encampment met his view, but instead the smoky sides of an Indian lodge. The entrance was uncovered, and gazing out he saw a long line of the rude structures. Heavens! was he in an Indian village! Had the Shawnees carried him to one of their towns. Though hard to comprehend, such was undoubtedly the case. Long must have been his period of unconsciousness, fearful the blow that caused it. A dull aching pain even now oppressed his brain. He raised his hands to his head; it was bandaged, and the wound was thrillingly painful to the touch.

"My insensibility has spared me much suffering," he thought. "How strange to be here! The savages must have retired—ah! I remember; I heard it at the tent! They have brought me with them as a prisoner. Isabel! Hiram! where are you, I wonder. Oh! my darling, could I but be assured of your deliverance I would care little for myself. And yet I may be in imminent danger; I doubtless am. Tecumseh asks and gives no quarter, it is said, and he has few subordinates so merciful as the White Wolf. But the great leader of the Shawnees would certainly not slay me as I am. Why was I spared at all?"

Thus he reflected until he was interrupted by the entrance of a warrior.

"Ugh!" exclaimed the savage, observing the improved condition of the prisoner. "Pale face wake; long sleep; he not die."

"You speak English," said Earnest.

"Yeh," returned the savage. "Owallah speak Esangish; he quick learn the tongue."

"I am your prisoner, I suppose. How long have I been here?"

"One, two long day. Pale face sleep all time. Injin think he not wake. He starve saleep."

Earnest was very weak, but he had not thought of food. The warrior's words suggested the need of sustenance. This necessity the Indian also saw, and proceeded at once to give the young soldier some refreshment. A thin nutritious gruel had been prepared, evidently in anticipation of the prisoner's return to consciousness, and this was now offered him. He drank a portion, and though feeling somewhat strengthened fell back on his couch and lay there in silence for some time.

The warrior, expressing his satisfaction at the improvement in the condition of his captive patient, soon withdrew from the lodge.

"He seems almost kind," thought the Major, "but it may be a very doubtful sort of kindness. I may be spared and healed only for the stake and torture. Unless"—a sudden hope aroused him—"unless White Wolf, who was so merciful to Hiram, will also intercede for me."

Night soon darkened the lodge—and after another visit by the warrior, he was left alone, no guard apparently being near to watch him. Nor was any needed, for escape, in his present condition, was not to be thought of. This the Indian doubtless knew.

Ten days Earnest remained in the Shawnee village. He was treated at all times leniently, and even with tenderness, though he had now almost recovered. His strength was greater than before his capture. His spirits rose accordingly, and he began to tire of his confinement. His intense anxiety to know the fate of his beloved, made his present position doubly irksome and distressing.

One fact he had learned with joy during the later period of his captivity,—he was White Wolf's prisoner. This fact he accepted as an explanation of the kindness with which he had been treated. The remarkable chief himself, he had not seen; he was not in the village, nor had he been, Owallah admitted, since the first day of the arrival of the savages at their town.

At the expiration of the tenth day, an unusual stir pervaded the village, and from the little he was permitted to know, the Major guessed that the tribe was again preparing for the war-path. This was indeed the case. Tecumseh had prevailed on his warriors to join the British once more, and they were excitedly engaged in making preparations to depart. It was an anxious hour to the captive. What disposition would be made of him? Would he be left behind with the squaws and old men? or could White Wolf be induced to release him? But the chief had not returned.

He came the next morning, however, just as the warriors were leaving their encampment. Earnest was chafing in the lodge that was his prison. Approaching footsteps, quick and eager, were heard outside. The large skin that formed the door was thrown aside, and a stalwart and imposing figure entered, which he knew at once must be that of White Wolf. But the white chief did not come alone; behind him followed a young man—a "pale face," wearing the garb of civilization—whose appearance was most striking and attractive. He was the handsomest youth, the Major thought, his eyes had ever beheld. A form that was manly grace itself; features fair and regular as those of a beautiful woman, but redeemed from all femininity by a look of manliness, courage, and dashing hauteur—a pride that won rather than repelled; a bold, bright eye, whose glances were both soft and penetrating; a smiling mouth, shadowed by a dark moustache; rich, curling masses of hair, clustering around a high and intellectual brow;—such in person was the stranger. He wore a hunting-dress of fine material, elaborately ornamented; moccasins encased his feet; and a handsome hunting-cap, adorned with a bright feather, was on his head.

The greeting of White Wolf was very cordial, and after replying to the salutation of the chief, Major Hallowell turned toward the youth, who smiled and nodded with winsome friendliness.

"The pale face is nearly well," spoke the chief. "He did not die as White Wolf feared he would."

"I am restored to health and strength," replied Earnest, with gratitude. "I have been kindly cared for, and know that it is to you that I am indebted for it all. Let me thank you, even though death be my portion hereafter."

"The pale face shall not perish if White Wolf can prevent it. But danger is around. His braves would spare not the lives of the blue-coats unless for ransom. They frown at their leader for his mercy to such as the pale-face. We go again to the battle. The warriors of White Wolf cry for his presence. The young officer cannot remain behind. He must go with us."

Our hero heard these concluding words with the greatest joy. To be left in the Indian village was what above all things he disliked and dreaded.

White Wolf after in the Indian manner acquainting the two young men with each other, went to the further end of the lodge, and appeared to be collecting the paraphernalia of a warrior's outfit. Moccasins, leggings, a blanket, a belt, feathers, and other ornaments he drew forth from a receptacle under one of the couches. He next procured a quantity of war paints and a brush. He looked significantly at all these articles and then at Earnest.

"What does he mean?" asked the latter of the young stranger, with whom he had been conversing while the chief was busy.

"I comprehend," answered the youth. "It is his design to disguise you, and perhaps myself as one of his braves; or, perhaps, it is intended that you shall appear to join them as one of their number. Such accessions to their strength are not unusual at this time. There are at least four white men besides this chief in the tribe, I know. They are abandoned renegades, however; while White Wolf is a man of mercy and honor."

These words were spoken with a murmur, so that the chief, it is probable, did not understand them.

"And who are you, if I may ask?" inquired Earnest, strongly interested in the romantic-looking stranger.

"I too am a prisoner like yourself," he answered to the questioner's surprise. "I am one of White Wolf's captives, though a privileged one. My name is Verne de Verne."

"De Verne!" echoed the Major, astonished to find that the young man bore the same name that Liola did.

"You seem surprised," said the other. "Is the name familiar?"

"It is, indeed, though only of late and through others."

"Strange," murmured Verner. "The name is borne by those of my family alone. Whom do you know who assumes or claims it?"

There was a touch of pride in the speaker's tone, as if he doubted the right of any but his own proud family to bear that patrician name.

"One most worthy, as I believe, and to whom it belongs, not by assumption but by right. Her name is Liola."

"Liola! Liola De Verne!" cried the youth. "Can it be possible that *she* lives! She is my cousin, and was stolen from her home years ago—or somehow disappeared—and has been long thought dead. She was but a child when she was lost. I had been her, but I know the facts. Tell me all you can concerning her, I beg of you."

They were interrupted by White Wolf, who briefly explained the plan he had formed for protecting his captives, and for restoring them to their friends. They were to assume the Indian garb and character, and receive the war-paint upon their faces. All the articles necessary to attiring them as braves of the tribe were at hand. The metamorphosis, with the skillful assistance of their strange friend, was quickly made. Very changed was their appearance from what it had been. White Wolf smiled approvingly as he surveyed the two young men.

"Good braves!" he cried in admiration. "Good Shawnees. Make good fight, maybe."

"I cannot fight against my countrymen," said Major Hallowell. "You will not require that of me?"

"No, no," was the answer. "The young officer shall not slay his brothers. Trust White Wolf. All will be well."

"And so it will, I verily believe," thought Earnest, wondering at the magnanimity of his protector. "Never shall I forget this kindness at the hands of one whom I would suppose would be a heartless enemy. He must be loved and valued by his tribe, or they would not permit such frequent friendly acts in behalf of their foes. They would remove him from the leadership he holds. He must have obtained strange ascendancy over them in some way."

And this was indeed the case. This humane associate of savages—this adopted child of the Shawnee tribe—had secured the devotion of his warriors by saving on one occasion the life of one of their great chiefs, under circumstances so trying and peculiar that the admiration and gratitude of the Indians were aroused in the highest degree. The "pale face" had ventured to the rescue of a chief when his own braves drew back afraid! Since that hour he had held sway over them, though as he himself had said, his warriors sometimes frowned at his repeated acts of mercy. It was under the protection of this remarkable man that Earnest Hallowell and his youthful and interesting companion, Verner De Verne, now went forth from the lodge to join the warriors of the tribe.

"Do I not make a formidable looking 'brave?'" asked the former, almost with laughter, although their situation was not one to inspire mirth.

"And I?" smiled the youth. "Will not the Shawnee maidens admire me, though I carry no scalps in my girdle?"

They were indeed handsome figures—the tall, finely-proportioned form of the Major, and the slender, graceful person of Verner.

We will not follow them through the forest; we must return to those we left upon the waters of the Raisin—the beautiful Liola, her pretended husband, and the secretly triumphant borderers.

"You are heading down stream!" cried Alfred Carleton, observing in the growing light that a change in the direction of the canoe had been made. The oarsmen ignored his words.

"What do you mean?" he called again, astonished to find that no attention had been paid to his exclamation, and half rising to his feet.

Hiram Skale also arose.

"We are indeed," he said; "and it is our intention, Alfred Carleton, to continue in this direction."

And with these words, that the Briton heard with amazement, the scout turned suddenly upon him, and with one tremendous blow of the oar laid him senseless in the bottom of the boat.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

☞ Of course it is possible that ye Grand Duke Alexis may have had that noble membrane, his heart, touched, perhaps bumped, by some of our charming belles, else why should one of them "drop into poetry" in this wise:

"There's a Muscovite youth named Alexis,
Who an officer first of the deck is,
And he came here to see
What this country might be,
Ere our land to his own he annexes.

"But the young, tender heart of Alexis
Its owner most strangely now vexes,
That it hard has been hit he
Owns up, in our city,
By one who the best of her sex is.

"He swears he would run at her beck, sis,
From St. Petersburg clear down to Texas—
And *her mamma's mine—and his*—
But, if I know my *biz*,
I shall never tell tales on Alexis."

☞ Get your sweetheart a new set of teeth as a Christmas present," is the invitation of an advertising dentist.

☞ A young girl who recently married a millionaire is now said to have an old head on young shoulders.

☞ Little Rock, Ark., has taken a census of her dogs, developing 7,000.

☞ The New York Mail says:—"The definition of 'wedding' in the fashionable vocabulary means a grand crisis of clothes; 'bride,' a peg on which finery of all kinds is hung; 'bridegroom,' a sober, black object following the bride, of no account in particular, and yet without whom there would be no fuss, and the fun could not go on."

☞ "I think," said the doctor, "that you have an affection in the lumbar region." "What has caused it, doctor?" asked the patient. "Bad board, no doubt," said the doctor.

☞ The pastor of Plymouth Church is going to California to see the big trees. However large a beech he may see, he will still consider himself a Beech-er.

☞ An old stager was compelled by his worthy spouse to "join the cold water army," which he did, promising not to touch a drop of anything except in sickness. He has never been well since.

☞ Words to the whys—Answers to conundrums.

Extracts From "The Last Tournament."

A NEW POEM BY ALFRED TENNYSON.

ISOLT.

Down in a casement sat,
A low sea-sunset glorying round her hair,
And glossy-throated grace, Isolt the Queen.
And when she heard the feet of Tristram grind
The spiring stone that scaled about her tower,
Flashed, started, met him at the doors, and there
Belted his body with her white embrace.

THE KING'S JESTER.

That night came Arthur home, and walk'd his court,
All in a death-dumb autumn-dripping gloom,
The stairway to the hall, and look'd and saw
The great Queen's bower was dark,—about his feet
A voice clung sobbing till he question'd it,
"What art thou?" and the voice about his feet
Sent up an answer, sobbing, "I am thy fool,
And I shall never make thee smile again."

THE MASSACRE.

Thus he fell
Head-heavy, while the knights, who watch'd him, roar'd
And shouted, and leapt down upon the fall'n;
There trampled out his face from being known,
And sank his head in mire, and slimed themselves.
Nor heard the King for their own cries, but sprang
Thro' open doors, and swording right and left
Men, women, on their sodden faces hurl'd
The tables over and the wines, and slew
Till all the rafters rang with woman-yells,
And all the pavement streamed with massacre;
Then, yell with yell echoing, they fired the tower,
Which half that autumn night, like the live North,
Red-pulsing up thro' Alioth and Akor,
Made all above it, and a hundred meres
About it, as the water Moab saw
Come round by the East, and, out beyond them flush'd
The long low dune, and lazy-plunging sea.

Heathersley Grange;

OR, THE

WRECKERS OF THE CORNISH COAST.

A Romance of the Days of the Young Pretender.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

IN WHICH HUGH HATTERICK FINDS HIS LEVEL AT LAST.

The wrecker, whenever he was engaged in any desperate enterprise, made it a rule to imbibe a large quantity of drink, and on this occasion he did not fall away from the charter. So instead of going straight on towards the spot where he intended to wreak his vengeance, he went into the little inn where he usually indulged in his potations, imbibed a sufficient amount of brandy to ensure himself what is called pot-courage, and then rolled away towards the home of the Harbor-master, where Douglas Armstrong, his wife, Violet, and Tom were all snug in their beds.

He had provided himself with no implements, save those simple ones which a rural house-breaker might be expected to use, such as a chisel, a hammer, and a long and strong-bladed knife, for he intended no clumsy attempt at arson, but a thorough and bold assault on the house itself.

Everything was buried in profound silence and darkness as he crept along. The people in Tregear had been aroused by the sounds of battle when the coast-guard had attacked the wreckers, but they were so used to such things that when at length the noise of contention died away they retired to bed, and slept as soundly as before.

It was fortunate, therefore, for Hugh Hatterick that he did not come forth from the inn before, as his slinking form would surely have been recognized by the towns-people, who, since the attempt to force Violet Armstrong into a marriage against her will, had become the deadly enemies of the wrecker.

He passed on quickly, never staying to think whether he was observed or not; never pausing even to think how he should defend himself were he attacked; never dreaming, indeed, that any one in Tregear had lost faith in him save the "silly, drunken fool," as he denominated Pouncefort.

At length the wished-for spot was reached. All was quiet in and around the little home, and the wrecker looked carefully round him.

"All's well," he muttered; "they sleep without suspicion. They will soon sleep the sleep of death. At last, Hugh Hatterick, you will have your revenge!" Then, kneeling down by the French window, he prepared to break into the drawing-room.

The place had been a peaceful happy place that evening. Sad as was the state of affairs at Heathersley Grange, Violet could not avoid feeling a kind of quiet bliss at the idea of having so thoroughly and utterly escaped the hands of Hugh Hatterick.

Tom and his mother were delighted, not only at this, but at their reunion with their brother; while the Harbor-master, although many a sin was on his soul, was full of joy to think that he had escaped the terrible crime of having slain his own son.

Violet had heard again from Henry.

The letter was somewhat desponding; for, as we have seen, he had heard but evil news from the Home Secretary in regard to his father, but it was full of love for her; and this, in spite of all other sorrows, could not fail to give joy to her breast.

So they had sat by the fire for hours talking of old times, and coining hopes for the future, never thinking of the snake who was preparing to cast his deadly venom upon all. At length, however, they had all retired to rest, and the fire died out on the hearth, and the place was as still as the tomb.

Hugh Hatterick reached the cottage at about two in the morning, just at the turn of the night. Quietly, gently, as he knelt at the window, he worked to force his way in. He knew Douglas Armstrong of old to be a light sleeper, and he was aware that the slightest fall of glass would disturb him and bring him to the rescue.

Down in country places which seem really the most exposed, the fastenings upon doors are most absurdly weak, and the shutters left entirely unclosed. This was just the case with the cottage of the Harbor-master. The windows were what are termed French, and the fastenings consisted simply of two bolts, which a child, with proper implements, could have forced out; and yet, with a full knowledge of the deadly enmity of Hugh Hatterick and his fellows, Douglas Armstrong, night after night, left no better protection for his family.

Deluded as he was in regard to his own misdoings, he scarcely imagined that there were others in the town who could be guilty of like enormities.

So the wrecker easily made his way into the room.

Once within the apartment he closed the window as it had been before, and drew down the blind, lest any stray passer-by should see his shadow. After this he broke up some of the chairs stealthily and quietly, and dragged up the carpet, and placed newspapers and papers of all kinds in a heap. Then, with a chuckle, he drew from his pocket a black bottle. The contents of this he poured over the heap, soaking everything.

Then he struck a match, and applied a light to the heap. Standing by—feeling delighted and exhilarated at the prospect of having his immediate revenge—exulting in his success, and watching with feverish delight the lapping of the small flame, which was so soon to be a huge one, he was suddenly surprised by seeing one of the dark shadows taking form and approaching him.

So quickly it came that he could hear nothing. But when it came nearer he saw distinctly who it was, none other than Douglas Armstrong, the Harbor-master.

He had heard no noise, but an instinctive feeling had invaded his breast that his home was unprotected from the assaults of his enemies, and being unable to sleep under this conviction, he had wandered down into the drawing-room.

The recognition was mutual. Quick, too, was Douglas Armstrong to perceive what deadly wrong was intended to those sleeping beings who slept the sleep of innocence above.

Dashing forward, he wrenched from the belt of the wrecker, ere Hugh Hatterick could prevent him, his long knife.

"Wretch! villain! tempter! I have you at last!" he said, in accents choked with rage.

One stab, and the wrecker fell backward almost among the flames. But only for a moment. He was too strong a man to succumb to such a blow as that. Up he sprang, and eyeing Douglas Armstrong for a moment with a look of deadly hate, at length rushed upon him and dealt him a deadly blow upon his head.

Douglas Armstrong gave one gasping cry and fell back, with his feet in the fire.

"Ha! ha!" cried Hugh Hatterick, as he folded his arms and gazed at the prostrate form. "Ha! ha! there is now no witness against me. Burn, burn! destroyer of my hopes—partner in my crimes! You and your brood will be blotted out from existence forever by the most terrible of all deaths, and I shall live to triumph!"

But he was wrong if he imagined that the Harbor-master had done with life yet. Though the fire began to burn, and the flames to lap upwards towards the ceiling, he rose for one moment, ere he lapsed into insensibility, and uttered one despairing cry.

A cry that resounded through the cottage, and rung out drearily on the night air.

A shrill, sharp cry, that seemed like the last despairing cry of the lost!

There was a heavy sound as of some one rushing down the stairs, just as Douglas Armstrong fell back after the utterance of his cry for help, and Hugh Hatterick rushed out into the night.

But he had one grim satisfaction as he did so. There was a blinding sheet of flame—a glare as of a furnace—and as he passed out into the grounds a cloud of blue smoke enveloped him, and wreathed itself in ghost-like wreaths over the green lawn and the flowers.

The light, however, which gave him such great satisfaction, had been seen by others.

The coast-guard, returning from the conflict near the Dead Man's Cave, had caught sight of the reflection—a reflection like that of the beacon fire that had often led unfortunate mariners to their deaths.

There was at once a gathering together of the leaders, and in less time than it has taken to tell this, the whole of the coast-guard men, who had been engaged in the attack on the wreckers, were making their way with all speed towards the Harbor-master's cottage.

If Hugh Hatterick had been intoxicated before, he was doubly so now.

The brandy had got into his brain without any aid.

How much more so, then, the triumph of successful vengeance.

So he scarcely stopped to see whither he was going, and certainly was unaware that any one was near him, when he was stopped by a body of men.

"Where away so quickly, Hugh Hatterick?" shouted the man who seized him.

"As usual, where I please," answered the wrecker, savagely.

"Not this time then, I fancy," replied the captain; "you'll have to give some little account of yourself."

"And, pray, what for?" shouted Hatterick, as he stood glaring at the speaker, held, be it said, meanwhile, between two strong men.

The captain of the coast-guard pointed towards the house of Douglas Armstrong.

"You see yonder conflagration, do you not?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Well, who was the author of that fire, let me ask?"

"How should I know?"

"Shall I tell you?" cried the coast-guard captain, fiercely. "It was you, and you only, who fired yonder house, which I believe to be that of Douglas Armstrong, the Harbor-master, and for which you are our prisoner."

"Not caught yet!" shouted the wrecker, in a voice of fierce derision.

Then, with a strength which truly seemed superhuman, he flung off the grasp of the two men who held him, and fled away towards the cliffs.

"Divide into two parties, and after him!" cried the captain.

He was determined to capture him.

For years Hugh Hatterick had successfully and boldly defied the law.

And why?

Because no one as yet had had the cleverness to bring anything home to him.

Now, however, that there was no doubt that he had committed an act of incendiarism, they were determined to catch him.

So they eagerly obeyed the orders of their officers.

Half of the party left from the attack near the Dead Man's Cave (for many had been wounded and more than one killed) went one way, and half another, so that there was no alternative left to the desperate wrecker but that of throwing himself over the cliffs.

Hugh Hatterick seemed to see this, and he soon came to bay.

It was an unfortunate place for him, however, that he chose.

There was not even a shadow of a chance of his running down the cliff, or even of leaping from rock to rock.

It was nothing but a flat place, with his enemies on one side and a sheer fall of three hundred feet on the other.

He saw that some fearful fate awaited him at last.

You could see this by his ghastly pallor, and glaring eyes, and his set lips, by his manner and his attitude altogether.

"Now, then," he cried, as he stood on the very edge of the cliff, "what want you with me?"

"Your surrender, Hugh Hatterick," cried the captain of the coast-guard.

A loud, jeering laugh was the wrecker's only answer.

"Surrender, or you will meet your death," said the officer.

And so saying, he advanced nearer.

"Death," cried the desperate man "is a thing which Hugh Hatterick has faced all his life, and will not shrink from now. But I can tell you this, Captain Hawkshaw, that if I die I will take one other with me."

With these words, he made a spring forward and was upon the captain ere he had time to defend himself.

The sword which Hawkshaw had held in his hand was useless in this close hand-to-hand encounter, and he dropped it, therefore, at once.

It was a fearful, deadly fight this, on the very edge of the cliff, for each man grasped his adversary by the wrist, to prevent the use of the knives which glittered in their belts.

Hugh Hatterick, however, was the stronger of the two, and it was soon evident to the coast-guard men that their captain was getting the worst of it.

But they dared not fire, for an inch the wrong way would be the death of their own leader.

At length, by a vigorous effort, the wrecker dashed his foe to the ground, and drew his long gleaming knife aloft to plunge it into the heart of his foe.

But he was spared this last murder.

Just as he rose up to give vigor to the stroke, there was a flash, a report, and Hugh Hatterick, flinging his arms aloft, reeled back towards the very verge of the rock.

Here he for an instant made one last desperate effort to steady himself.

But his strength was gone; he had received a mortal wound, and, with a groan that was almost a shriek, wild, piercing and terrible, he fell over the Dead Man's Point—down, down three hundred feet on to the sharp, jagged rocks, where the heir-at-law had lain before him.

Here we must leave him for a moment, and the cottage, too, of the Harbor-master, blazing upwards towards heaven in the gray light of the morning, and the towns-people running towards it in wonder at the conflagration and the sounds of firing, while we return once more to Henry Heathersley.

CHAPTER XXXV.

IN WHICH AN UNEXPECTED FRIEND COMES TO THE RESCUE.

The time for the trial of Sir Digby Heathersley and Captain Hubert Rivasole was now fixed, and from what Henry had heard from the advocate whom he had engaged, he had little hope of the verdict going in his father's favor.

The evidence against him was decidedly strong, and, in fact, nothing could save him but the royal clemency.

With a sickened heart, then, on the second day before that fixed for the trial, Henry took his way to the London prison to which the old baronet had been removed.

He felt, as it were, ashamed to meet his father and tell him of his ill success.

He knew well, of course, that he had done all in his power to effect the release of his father—but he felt shame at his ill success; and when he entered the presence of Sir Digby, he entered it as if he had been guilty of some evil deed.

Sir Digby greeted him with undisguised pleasure.

"How glad I am to see you, my son," he said, "it brings back to me my hours of freedom, and gives me renewed hopes for the future. How have you succeeded?"

Henry shook his head sadly.

"Alas! I have not succeeded at all," he said, "the home secretary, though an old friend and schoolmate of yours, as he says, can do nothing. Your offence is one on which the king looks ever with a stern and implacable eye, and he has no hopes of pardon."

"My son," said Sir Digby, "you bring me but the news I expected. I had no hopes of clemency. Once upon a time the king gave me his royal hand, 'that if I asked, at any time, or under any circumstances, a boon from him, he would grant it.' But that pledge of safety I have long since lost; and no doubt his majesty has forgotten it by this time. It would be useless to remind him of it."

"Perhaps not so useless as you may deem it," said Henry; "at any rate, in such a case as this, I would leave no stone unturned to effect your escape from such a shameful fate as that to which they desire to doom you."

The old baronet placed his hand upon his son's shoulder.

"My son," he said, "it is no shameful fate. Death for high treason against a sovereign is no disgrace; it is a martyrdom. It merely proves that you hold conscientious opinions against royalty, or one particular royal family, and have courage enough to avow them. If I die I shall wear a crown of martyrdom, nothing more. You can hold up your head proudly as Sir Henry Heathersley, and remember me without a shadow of shame."

Henry pressed his father's hand in a fervent grasp.

"Talk not of death," he said; "it thrills me with a deadly fear. You must not, shall not die. I will see the king this day."

On parting with his father he visited Captain Hubert Rivasole.

He found the young captain in far better spirits than his father.

Always gay and light-hearted, he regarded his position with a kind of contempt, which seemed to show how little he ever dreamed of conviction.

"Well," said Henry Heathersley, as Hubert grasped his hand, "I hope I see you well. This is a sadly miserable place for two friends to meet in."

The Frenchman shrugged his shoulders in his usual way.

"*Eh bien*," he said, "it is, indeed, an unpleasant place; but what makes me more satisfied with it is that they cannot keep me in it."

"And pray, why not?" asked Henry, amused at his nonchalance.

"Because they have no proofs against me. I am a French subject, and owe no allegiance to King George. Besides, there is no one to prove that I have ever attempted to act treasonably. I have simply brought letters (the contents of which I am not supposed to know) to your father. I have demanded my freedom; they must give it."

"You are confident that they must do so?" asked Henry.

"I am."

"Then," said Henry, smiling, "I will waste no further time with you, but go at once to the king, and plead for my father."

So saying, he grasped his friend heartily by the hand, and departed.

From the prison he proceeded straight towards the palace.

Although King George was about as inaccessible as a king could possibly be, a determination to save the father he so loved gave Henry courage.

He was received at the palace by Colonel de Bernard, who politely took and carried to the king the brief petition for an audience which Henry had brought with him.

He was kept waiting for some considerable time ere he received an answer.

And then it was a negative.

"The king," said the colonel, "declines to see you, Master Heathersley."

"And why?" demanded the heir of the Grange, almost fiercely.

The colonel raised his hands as if in deprecation of his resentment.

"My dear sir," he said, "I can easily understand your excitement, acting as you do, to save a father whom you love. But remember that I am not the king, but only delegated by him to bring to you a painful message. He says that such an interview as that you desire would be an injustice both to him and to you. Your father, he says, *must* stand his trial and abide by the result of that public tribunal."

"This is most unjust," said Henry. "I could have proved to his majesty that my father holds from him a sacred promise that he would grant him one favor—no matter when or under what circumstances."

"Has he this promise clear in writing?" asked the colonel.

"He has not."

"Then a verbal message is useless. His majesty would not remember it."

It was as Henry Heathersley had feared before he came, and as Sir Digby had said then.

There was no faith to be placed in the pledged word of a king.

Unable to speak from excess of emotion, he bowed low to the colonel, and passed out of the palace, feeling far more high treason in his heart against King George than had ever animated the soul of his father.

It is such scenes as these that make men rebels.

On reaching the inn where he had put up, he was surprised at the door by the landlord accosting him with a low bow.

"Your honor," he said "a lady is waiting for you alone."

"Yes, Master Heathersley," he continued, "and excuse me, your honor, if I say that she's as pretty a young lady, and as gentle-eyed and gentle-voiced as ever I've seen in this world."

Henry's heart beat quickly.

"Gentle-eyed and gentle-voiced, and as pretty as——"

Who could be all this except his own Violet Armstrong?

However he did not wait to think, but rushed eagerly up the stairs.

Though there was no reason why he should imagine such a thing, he almost believed that he should find Violet Armstrong waiting there for him, fled from her father, fled from her desperate lover, but at any rate fled to him!

And yet, knowing well what troubles she had endured before, knowing well what troubles she must endure again to come to him in London, he was hardly disappointed when he saw another smiling, pretty face—the face of his cousin, Alice Heathcote.

She advanced towards him delightedly, holding out both hands.

"Oh! I am so glad to see you, dear Henry," she cried, "you did not expect me?"

"No, indeed; how could I, dear Alice? But tell me, why have you journeyed thus far alone? It must, indeed, be most important business to bring you to London at such a time."

"Yes, indeed, Henry," said Alice Heathcote. "Are we alone?"

"Yes; quite."

"Then I have good news for you."

"And what news, may I ask?" asked Henry Heathersley, eagerly.

"Richard Langton is dead."

"Dead!"

"Yes; murdered by Hugh Hatterick."

Henry paused.

"Under such circumstance," he murmured, "I cannot say thank Heaven, though I might well be prompted to do so. But with him dies the evidence against my father."

"And against my lover also," said Alice; "but," she added, with an arch smile, "you have forgotten one thing, which is most important."

"And what is that?"

"The documents which were left in the crevice of the rock near the Smuggler's Gap."

Henry started.

"Ah! truly," he cried, "I had forgotten that, and the words that my father inadvertently uttered may have been overheard, perhaps by the very person who desired to betray him."

"Harry," exclaimed Alice, "the papers no longer exist. I have found and destroyed them."

He looked for a moment, and then came an embrace and a kiss, which might well have caused jealousy in the heart of Violet Armstrong had she been there to see.

"You are a dear, good girl," he said. "But were you not watched?"

"I was, and by Hugh Hatterick; but he found his match. I stabbed him in the arm when I saw he was dragging me, like a brutal ruffian as he was, towards the cliff; and when he let me go I ran away into the darkness, and he lost me. However, there it is, Henry. Richard Langton is dead, and—shall I tell you all?"

"Yes, yes."

"Well, Hugh Hatterick didn't get the papers."

"Yes, yes, you said so before."

"Well, Violet Armstrong went to church to be married to Hugh Hatterick last Saturday.

A deadly pallor overspread Henry Heathersley's face, and she saw at once that she had gone too far.

She was too good-hearted a girl to care to keep up the game.

"Stay, Harry, stay!" she cried. "Forgive me if I have given you one moment's pain, for God knows both you and I have suffered long enough. Violet Armstrong did go to church last Saturday morning with Hugh Hatterick; but the marriage was nipped in the bud."

"But," said Henry Heathersley, bitterly, "why did she go with him?"

Alice Heathcote looked up pleadingly into his pale face.

"Why did she go? you ask—you, who know how she was situated. Oh! you men, you are always so jealous—so uncompromising—so unforgiving. She was compelled, she was, I may say, absolutely driven to the altar, or she would not have gone; but she was saved as if by a miracle."

"And how?"

"By the return of her brother from abroad, unexpectedly and suddenly."

"What, has Robert Armstrong returned?" asked Henry.

"He has; and he has been the means of severing forever the connection between Hugh Hatterick and Violet. However, you will see for yourself when you go down again to Tregegar.

Henry shook his head.

"Alas!" he said, "that may be a long—a very long and sad time yet."

"And why?"

"The government intends to show no mercy whatever to those whom they regard as traitors."

"Oh! God—my Hubert, what of Hubert? You said in your letter he was safe."

"Yes, yes; I believe him safe," said Henry; "but you forget I am thinking also of my father. I believe truly, that Captain Rivasole is free from the English law; but it is not so with Sir Digby Heathersley. They have him. He is an English subject, and they mean to keep him. We must—we can do nothing but await the trial."

The words thus uttered proved too true—too true for those who waited.

In spite of all endeavors his trial came on in the usual course.

The judge—a creature of the court—had a special prejudice, of course, against the prisoner, and although the jury were respectable men, chosen indiscriminately from among the citizens of London, the verdict was one of GUILTY.

There was not one there who did not pity the condemned. His noble figure, his noble face, his whole demeanor, won him the pity and admiration of the court.

What was to be done? Nothing. He was guilty.

Guilty, of what?

This no one could say; but it was stated to be high treason—treason against the king, who was such a good monarch that his own people laughed at him, and frequently were glad to aid rebels against him; a king who never did any good, and never much evil, and, who had been, perhaps, better dethroned than otherwise.

Poor Henry Heathersley! He was disconsolate indeed. If there was one thing in the world he loved, it was his father. Like others—like the author of this story—his love for his father was a passion!

He loved him as rapturously as most men love the women whom they hope to make their wives. But love him—respect him as he might, he was utterly helpless. He had seen how English justice acted with people. He had tried the king. In both he had seen nothing but complete failure.

No wonder, then, that he felt as if he had not a friend in the world; no wonder was it that he felt his heart leap when the soft voice of Alice Heathcote whispered to him—

"Cheer up! cheer up, Henry; *I* will save your father!"

How she could do so he never paused to conjecture.

The hope which it raised in his heart was enough, and he was compelled to be satisfied with it, for she refused to explain to him any part of her plan.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

(CONCLUSION.)

There was but a very short time left between the day of trial and that named for the execution, and at that period travelling was a very difficult matter—very different, indeed, to what it is in these times of telegraphs and railways.

Alice Heathcote, be it said, could not be expected to return to London very quickly; and it may be imagined, therefore, that the anxiety of Henry Heathersley was something intense.

He could but guess at the idea she had formed in her own mind as to the means of saving her uncle, which indeed could only be effected by the discovery of the lost letter from King George, who, cruelly resolute as he might be, would not be likely to depart from his pledged word.

Refusing Henry's offers then to accompany her, she sped away on her errand of mercy, leaving even her lover's side, and posting all the way to Tregegar without more rest than she could obtain by laying her weary head upon the carriage cushions.

It was somewhat a wild and desperate journey for her to take alone, without even a firm hope to guide her on her way, but she had a kind of belief in the success of her errand which she could not explain to herself.

It was not *hope*—it was a kind of resolve that Sir Digby Heathersley should not die.

She had heard him mention on several occasions an old family chest, in which had been stowed away useless papers, and things out of date of all kinds; and she had understood from the old baronet, that during a clearance of the house it had been removed.

But she had a certainty in her own mind that she had seen it since, stowed away in a cupboard among a lot of lumber—and it was with this faint prospect that she had started forth upon her journey.

Meanwhile the prisoner and his friends were waiting in terrible suspense.

There seemed truly so little hope, that as the days went by, Henry almost feared to meet his father's gaze when he visited him in his gloomy prison.

Visit him he did, however, and so did Hubert Rivasole: the privilege of remaining hours each day in his company being accorded to both.

Sir Digby Heathersly seemed much the least agitated of the three.

"You must not think," he said, "that this position takes me by surprise. It is not so. When I entered into the conspiracy, I had a full knowledge what risk I ran, and was by no means deterred from the performance of my duty by any fear of danger."

The same noble spirit actuated him as time went by.

The near approach of the fatal hour; the arrival of the last evening before the execution, wrought no difference in him.

But Providence had not ordered that he should die a death on the scaffold.

On the evening before the fatal day, when Henry and Hubert and the doomed baronet were seated in the cell, almost silently, there was a loud clangor at the outer gate, and presently the quick, heavy tramp of a warder was heard approaching.

Then the door was flung open, and a turnkey entered, bowing lowly and respectfully.

"Sir Digby Heathersley," he said, "I have good news for you. You are free!"

The three watchers sprang to their feet in amazement.

"Do not trifle with us at such a time as this," said Henry Heathersley, passionately. "Is this true?—where is the warrant?"

The man offered him a paper.

"I should not dream," he said, "of trifling with you. Sir Digby Heathersley is a free man—free to go when and where he pleases."

The man spoke truly.

The pardon was an immediate and unconditional one.

"Let us not wait to think," cried Henry, as he slipped a piece of gold into the man's hand. "Let us at once leave this place. At the inn where I and Hubert have been staying, we shall find, no doubt, the angel who has wrought this miracle."

It was not long before they arrived at the little hostelry where Henry Heathersley had taken up his abode since his arrival in London.

There, as he had expected, they found Alice Heathcote.

The search for the old chest had been no idle dream; and there, within its secret depths, she had discovered what she so eagerly desired—the king's written pardon, or what in reality amounted to it.

She had lost no time when she arrived in London in making her way into the king's presence, and demanding a fulfilment of his promise.

The king, who, like all the Georges, had a special love for the fair sex, was not so inaccessible to her as he was to Henry Heathersley, and at once granted her an audience.

She left him no time to think about refusal of her prayer.

"You come to me, Mistress Heathcote," he said, "to speak of your uncle, Sir Digby Heathersley?"

"I have," she said; "but I will not occupy your majesty's time. Here is a paper given to my uncle some years ago in acknowledgment of services done. Your majesty will, I am sure, be glad to ratify your word."

A cloud crossed the brow of the king as he read the letter.

"Well, well," he said, "my word *has* been pledged, and I must not break it; but never was I compelled more unwillingly to do such an action."

So saying, he sat down to his table, and wrote out the free pardon for Sir Digby Heathersley.

Alice's heart beat wildly in her bosom, and only waiting to kneel and kiss the king's hand, she fled from his presence, and made her way, as we have seen, to the prison.

We pass over the scene between the lovers, the overflowing gratitude of Sir Digby, and hasten to accompany them on their happy journey towards Tregegar.

Happy all of them now, for during the short stay of Alice at the Grange she had learned the death of Hugh Hatterick, his dastardly attempt just before his fearful end to destroy the Armstrongs, and the utter failure of his scheme.

Douglas Armstrong, truly, had been terribly burned and injured in the fire, and was even then in a condition of great peril; but then Robert, the long-lost son, had returned, the villain who had clouded their lives was dead, and Violet was free!

The latter was the sweet thought which warmed Henry Heathersley's heart as he went, and made each hour seem leaden-winged that separated him from her.

How cheerful Tregegar looked when he entered it—how sweetly blew the sea breezes—how changed all Nature, clad in its bright spring dress!

Delighted as he was to see the reception which Sir Digby received from all who knew him, he was yet impatient to get away, and to hear from Violet's own dear lips a renewal of their love, and the sweeter news that she was free—free to love him—free to be his wife, come weal, come woe!

So, as the evening drew in, he asked his father for an interview.

Sir Digby Heathersley almost guessed its import.

"Father," said Henry, "I have a question to put—a favor to ask you which affects my whole future life."

"You mean, I suppose, my boy," returned the baronet, kindly, "that you are in love?"

"That, sir, you have long known," replied Henry; "but I come to ask you more now. I come to ask your consent to my marriage with the object of my heart's affections."

"And do I know her name, Henry?" inquired Sir Digby.

"Yes, well. I have never changed in my desires on that point," said Henry. "The woman I love, and the only woman I shall ever love, is Violet Armstrong, the daughter of the Harbor-master."

"Well, well," said the baronet, "at any other time, and under other circumstances, I might feel disposed to question your taste and judgment; I will not—I cannot now. To you who have proved yourself so noble and so worthy a son I can deny nothing. You have my free and full consent, and may you be happy!"

Henry took his father's hand, and raised it to his lips.

"Heaven bless you, father," he said; "the hope of my life is fulfilled."

On arriving at the cottage of Douglas Armstrong he found that scarcely a vestige of the old home was left, and that the family had removed for a time to the house of a neighbor.

Here he found them gathered round the bed of Douglas Armstrong, who, saved as it were by a miracle from utter destruction, was yet ill and helpless, and little like the sturdy Harbor-master whom we met in the earlier part of our story.

But, nevertheless, despite his weakness, he welcomed Henry Heathersley gladly, and a bright smile lit up his face as he saw Violet and the heir of the Grange standing hand in hand by his bedside, and his son Robert, too, with the fair young bride who had been spoken of in Walter Hatterick's diary, and whom he had now brought home with him to England.

We shall not now linger over these minor events in our story.

Hugh Hatterick—dashed into a shapeless mass on the very rocks which had received the shattered form of Richard Langton, and buried in the very grave which the old sexton had dug for him—was no longer able to disturb them.

With Richard Langton had disappeared all trace of claim upon the Heathersley estates, for, as I before described, the documents which could alone bring beggary on the Heathersleys had floated away out over the waves of the boundless ocean, to be cast up, perhaps, in rage and wordless on the shores of some distant land.

So, at length, when the Harbor-master was sufficiently well to get about once more, the day was fixed for the double marriage—that of Captain Hubert with Alice Heathcote, and Violet Armstrong with Henry Heathersley.

A bright morning and bright smiles greeted the happy couples as they passed away from the Grange towards the village church, which such a short time before had seen the forced marriage of Violet and the wrecker nearly consummated in the presence of her weeping friends.

This was a far different spectacle.

Nature smiled upon them, as I have said, and bevies of lovely children strewed flowers in their path.

Their hearts were full of joy inexpressible, and when the knot was at length tied, and they returned to share in the noble repast provided at the Grange, it would have, perhaps, been a matter of difficulty to say which looked the more happy, the newly-married pairs, or Sir Digby and Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong.

For a time, seeing the happy face of his daughter, and thinking of the great future in store for her, having by his side also his long-lost son, he almost forgot that his own evil passions had nearly hurried him to a premature grave.

The marriages of both couples turned out, we need scarcely say, most happy ones, and although Alice soon sailed away with her husband to *la belle France*, they often learnt from her how well and happy she was in her adopted country.

Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong lived a long time in the cottage which Sir Digby rebuilt for them, though the former had soon to give up his post of Harbor-master, in consequence of declining health.

His nerves forsook him gradually, and though by a secret visit to the Dead Man's Cave he was enabled to restore to his son the papers and the money hidden therein, he never forgot that awful night, and gradually declined into a weak and decrepid old man.

A gun at sea would startle him from his sleep, and make him mutter strange things.

"God help poor souls at sea!" he would murmur, and then he would start up, crying "Let me go to help them. I have destroyed many—let me aid some."

It was with some difficulty that when he was like this he could be prevented from quitting his bed, and rushing down to the cliffs, where, upon dark evenings, he was often found wandering, muttering as strangely and wildly as at home—"God help poor sailors! Oh, God, that such things should be!"

He never lost himself sufficiently to tell his secret to his family and his friends.

They suspected, much suspected, that some dark deed had been done, of which he knew and of which he had repented, but they never dreamed of taxing him with it, or endeavoring to extort from him a confession which would have been only their own sorrow and disgrace.

One year after the marriage of his daughter, he passed away quietly amid a circle of his relatives, regretted by all—and falsifying Hugh Hatterick's prophecy at last.

"The Harbor-master's Secret is mine," the latter had said.

He had spoken falsely, for it died with him.

THE END.

☞ It has become known that no legal impediment exists to the marriage of Alexis with an American maiden, as the Russian royal family are not limited to royal blood. This is very encouraging to our belles, who are thinking how "Mrs. Alexandrovitch" would look on paper.

☞ Madame Thiers says French servants are all rogues. At the Tuileries it was necessary to sew up their pockets to prevent their stealing all the champagne, chickens, pies, and plate on a ball night.

☞ The Czar of Russia has five sons living—Alexander, the heir, Vladimir, Alexis, Sergie, and Paul, and an only daughter, Marie, seventeen years of age.

☞ CHRISTMAS.—This year Christmas comes on a Monday. The old poetical prophecy says:

If Christmas Day on Monday be,
A great winter that year you'll see,
And full of winds both loud and shrill;
But in the summer, truth to tell,
Stern winds shall there be, and strong,
Full of tempests and lasting long!
While battles they shall multiply,
And great plenty of beasts shall die;
He shall be found that steaketh aught,
Though then be sick though diest not.

☞ Somebody whistled. Teacher calls up a big boy on suspicion. Big boy comes up and holds out his hand, sullen and savage. Noble little boy comes manfully forward, and says, "I'm the boy that whistled, sir," at the same time extending his hand. Teacher simmers down, and lets them both off. (Mem.—Noble little boy thought teacher wouldn't lick him if he told the truth, but knew big boy would if he didn't.)

☞ During the year in which the marriage of the Prince of Wales took place, about fifteen hundred female children, in England, received the name of Alexandra, and nearly three thousand boys were registered Albert Edward.

☞ There was a case of sunstroke reported in St. Louis last week.

A Woman's Ruse.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY LETTICE THORPE.

"A new arrival in town, Hatty," exclaimed Sue Holmes, as she bounded into the room of her particular friend, a young girl of very unusual beauty and elegance.

"Indeed! Who is it?"

"Dick Silvertop is his name, and a most appropriate one, for he is rich as a Jew, and handsome as—as——"

"Apollo," suggested the less enthusiastic listener.

"Thank you, dear. He is from New York, and is looking for a wife, but he has a terrible fear of being married for his money, as his father left in his will that whoever happens to be the fortunate lady shall receive upon her wedding-day twenty-five thousand dollars—merely as a slight foretaste of what will follow."

"To whom did he tell all that?"

"To Cousin Frank."

"Well, if he is so fearful of being married for his money, what did he say anything about it for?"

"To set all the girls crazy, I suppose."

"He must be a purse-proud simpleton."

"No indeed, he is perfectly splendid, and awfully aristocratic. He will be at the party to-night."

"The observed of all observers, of course."

"Yes, his only fault is that he likes wine a little too well."

"Oh!" was the significant exclamation in return.

"Well, Hatty, I have made up my mind to marry that young man when he asks me. Rich, handsome and good-natured. What more can any reasonable girl demand?"

"A good deal more, *I* should say. Brains, soul and heart would be preferable in my opinion."

"O, well, Hatty, you are not an *ordinary* mortal, we all know, you never will find a man perfect enough to please your fastidious taste, and you will certainly be that most pitiable creature, an old maid."

"Better that than a drunkard's wife, Sue."

"Drunkard's wife, Hatty! who said anything about such a fearful alternative as that? Because a young man takes a little too much wine at a party sometimes, is no proof that he will turn out a regular inebriate. Anyway, I am willing to run the risk in this case, so now, Hat, don't you dare to stand in my way, and make yourself too charming to-night. You are the only girl that I am afraid of."

"Then you may set your heart entirely at rest, for your description of Mr. Silvertop is not a fascinating one to me, I assure you."

She did not feel quite assured, however, for she had too often seen Hatty's cool, indifferent manner prove far more attractive than the affability of others. And in the evening the provoking girl did indeed look lovely enough to subdue a stoic, Sue thought, in spite of all her entreaties to the contrary—and Mr. Silvertop, the lion of the evening, being no stoic at all, was captivated at the first glance, and obtaining an introduction, invited her to dance. But his face was greatly flushed, his voice husky and indistinct, and his walk quite unsteady, and Hatty who hated the slightest approach to intoxication, gave a polite, but very decided refusal. He turned away, and Sue, hoping that he would be seriously offended with her fastidious friend, placed herself where she could overhear his remarks to the gentleman near him.

"She is the prettiest girl in the room," he said; "and it is such an unusual thing for me to be refused. By Jove, it is rather a joke. I would dare wager a cool thousand, that there isn't another young lady in the room would refuse Dick Silvertop, with his millions of dollars."

"Well, who shall I introduce you to, next?" inquired his listener.

"Any one you please—provided she is pretty."

"Miss Holmes is a very bright, pleasant girl."

"Which is she."

"I will find her," said the gentleman.

So Sue slipped from her hiding-place, and managed to have him meet her, just as she had perfected her plans in regard to the self-satisfied and unsuspecting stranger.

"Miss Holmes, allow me to present Mr. Silvertop."

They stood and talked for some time—and then as the dancers took their places for a waltz, the gentleman invited Sue to join them.

"Please excuse me," she said, "I would rather not."

"Indeed, Miss," he replied, and turned on his heel, with a look of indignant astonishment.

Sue was completely chagrined by his manner—and having succeeded in playing eavesdropper a second time, she realized, in a cheering way, that listeners never hear any good of themselves.

"The little snob!" she heard him say, "because Miss Percy refused me, she follows suit. A Silvertop refused by a Holmes. Why, we are one of the oldest families in America. The presuming little simpleton. She really elevated her pug-nose quite loftily."

So poor Sue, very much discomfited, withdrew to the dressing-room, in tears. She never indulged in the melting mood very long, however. So drying her eyes, she returned to the dancing-room, inwardly vowing that she would win the rich aristocrat yet; and when a pretty woman once fully makes up her mind to marry a certain man, she is very apt to do it—because, "if a woman says she will, she *will*, you may depend on't."

Soon after this the gentleman, who was evidently more loquacious than reticent, avowed his intention of going into the country to seek a wife, who would marry him for himself alone. Of course this artless acknowledgment was repeated far and wide, and soon reached the ears of Sue, always wide-awake, and on the alert. So she managed, without any trouble whatever, to find out his intended hiding-place, and there the quick-witted girl went before him. He had never seen her but once, and then it was in the evening, so that it was no very difficult matter to change herself beyond his recognition. She cut off her hair, and wore it in curling rings about her face, which always makes a wonderful difference in a young girl's appearance. Then she artfully colored her cheeks, which were usually pale, so that when Mr. Silvertop met the pretty school mistress in the country, although her face did seem a little familiar, still it never occurred to him that it was the same Miss Holmes who had so offended him in the city, and much further was he from ever dreaming that she had come out purposely to meet him.

She had prepared herself especially for conquest. The short black curls on her forehead made her look several years younger than she was in reality, and over them she had jauntily tied a gypsy hat with blue ribbons, in which she was certainly quite bewitching. Then assuming an air of rustic bashfulness, she raised her great black eyes to Dick's face, and quickly lowered them again, in a way that fascinated the susceptible fellow immediately, and he congratulated himself upon having so soon found his ideal. He turned at a little distance, and followed her, which was all in the programme made out by Sue, so from time to time she looked slyly back over her shoulder, playing her part to perfection. He soon succeeded in making her acquaintance, and she continued to fill the role she had assigned herself, with all the art of a finished actress.

"Miss Sue," he said one day as they sat in an appropriate nook, by the side of a pretty babbling stream, "have you always lived in this village?"

"O, no," she replied, somewhat hesitatingly. "I came here to teach."

"Do you like to teach?"

"Not very well, I should prefer to have my time all to myself, and there are so few pretty children here. I do not like such rough, homely little creatures, and they all want to kiss me," she said, with a cheering affectation of artlessness.

"I do not blame them for that," exclaimed the young man, with an admiring look, then suddenly—"How would you like to live in the city in a fine house, and have an elegant carriage and horses, and plenty of servants to do your bidding?"

"O, it would be splendid!—that is—if——"

"If what, Sue, dear?" he asked in tones that became more and more tender.

"I do not like to tell," she replied, turning away her blushing face. "Tell me, darling," he whispered, as he seized her unresisting hand, for resistance was very far from her thoughts.

"I should not want to go there alone," she stammered.

"Will you go with me?" he asked, as he drew her towards him, and Sue had not played her part in vain. But when she saw that the young man was really very much in love with her, quite giving up his old wild ways for her sake, her conscience began to reproach her; and one day when he was pleading eagerly for a speedy marriage, she acknowledged that she had deceived him, and told him who she was. Then much to her surprise and relief, he burst into a merry laugh, and seemed to consider it a very funny achievement.

"Why, you little, sly puss," he exclaimed, "then you were just cheating me all the time, and I thought you were the sweetest little country girl in the world. Why, what an actress you would make! Charlotte Cushman and Ristori might hide their 'diminished heads.'"

"Oh, Dick," she said humbly, "can you forgive me?"

"Forgive you? Yes, if you will grant me a kiss for every one of the naughty stories you told. And it seemed to me all the time that I had seen your face before—"

"And you are not angry with me?"

"Why no, not a bit;" and after they were married he boasted of having the smartest wife in the world. Sue made him perfectly happy, and he became quite a steady married man. She never would have been a good wife for a poor man, but prosperity brought out all her best points. She received the promised twenty-five thousand dollars upon her wedding-day, and spent it generously. Her greatest annoyance was that her husband would persist in telling every one about their courtship, and, as she said to Hatty, "I absolutely dread having a stranger come into the house, for I know that Dick will have to tell the whole story." Hatty was not ill-natured, but

"Like the parrot of yore,
Though she never said much, she *thought* all the more."

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE WHALEMAN'S ADVENTURES IN THE SANDWICH ISLANDS AND CALIFORNIA. By WM. H. THOMAS, author of "The Gold-Hunters' Adventures," "The Bushrangers," etc., etc. Illustrated. One of the Ocean Life Series. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; Lee, Shepard & Dillingham, New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. This is a fine book of adventure for boys, written in an attractive and spirited manner, and gotten up in good style.

AMONG THE BRIGANDS. By Professor JAS. DE MILLE, author of the "B. O. U. C." "The Boys of Grand Pre School," etc., etc. Illustrated. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; Lee, Shepard & Dillingham, New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. In this volume the adventures of The Young Dodge Club in Italy among the Brigands are described in the most amusing manner.

THE CRUISE OF THE CASCO. By ELIJAH KELLOGG, author of "Leon Ben of Elm Island," "Arthur Brown, the Young Captain," etc. Illustrated. This is the third number of the Pleasant Cove Series, which is to be completed in six volumes. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; Lee, Shepard & Dillingham, New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

LUCIA, HER PROBLEM. By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "With Fate Against Him," "In Trust," etc. Published by Sheldon & Co., New York, and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philadelphia. This story which first appeared in THE POST some years ago under the title of "Sydnie Adriance" is now handsomely published in a book. Many of our readers who perused it with such interest then, will doubtless be glad to obtain it in this more permanent form.

☞ Of Mrs. Smythe, of Indianapolis, the remarkable statement is made, that she now has her fifth husband, and yet she has never changed her name. She was born a Smith, her first husband was named Smith, her second, Schmidt, her third, Smyth, her fourth, Smithe, and her present, Smythe.

☞ FIRST-RATE HONEYMOONING.—The New York Commercial says a gentleman who was recently married engaged a special car for himself and bride, beautifully fitted up inside and divided into bed-room, drawing-room, and kitchen, which was to be attached to every train, as they journeyed on their way, en route for San Francisco.

☞ A clergyman, reading a chapter of the Bible for his congregation, found himself at the foot of the page, with the words: "And the Lord gave Noah a wife;" then turning over two pages instead of one, he continued: "and he pitched her within and without with pitch."

☞ Said Bill to Jack, "How many legs would a calf have, calling the tail one?" "Five," answered Jack. "No it wouldn't, for calling the tail one wouldn't make it one."

☞ Women do not dress to please men as much as to spite each other. When a lady meets another on the street better dressed than herself, she turns up her nose and says, "Snob." When not so well dressed as herself, she twists along with more elegance, opens her lips sort of bewitchingly, smiles upon the end of her nose serenely, and just articulates, "Plebeian." When another lady turns around to look at her admiringly, she is happy.

Progress of the Revolution.—A new light dawned upon the world with the introduction of PLANTATION BITTERS twelve years ago. Drastic purgation went out—restoration and renovation came in. The eyes of the people were opened to the great fact that the way to cure disease is to strengthen and support its victims, not to place them at its mercy by depriving them of the little strength they have. It soon became evident that as a means of infusing vitality into the feeble system, regulating the secretions, curing indigestion, and reforming a bilious habit of body, no medicinal preparation then known was at all comparable to the new restorative. Since then hundreds of attempts have been made to rival the Bitters. They have all failed, and the GRAND REVOLUTION IN MEDICAL TREATMENT, which was commenced in 1860, is still in progress. Nothing can stop it, for it is founded on the principle, now universally acknowledged, that physical vigor is the most formidable antagonist of all human ailments, and experience has shown that PLANTATION BITTERS is a peerless invigorant, as well as the best possible safeguard against epidemic diseases.

PROSPECTUS FOR 1872.

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The publishers of THE LADY'S FRIEND have concluded to reduce its price to single subscribers from $3.50 to $3—the prices to Clubs (already very low) remaining the same.

They shall continue to obtain for their readers the very best novelets, stories, poetry, etc., that can be procured, including articles from the gifted pens of Miss Amanda M. Douglas, Miss A. L. Muzzey, Daisy Ventnor, August Bell, Mrs. Margaret Hosmer, A. M. Dana, Madge Carroll, Emma B. Ripley, Nora Perry, M. C. Pyle, Ida Rowland, etc., etc., etc.

The following novelets, with the usual variety of short stories, are announced for 1872:

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OR,

LADY ANDINNIAN'S TRIAL.

By MRS. HENRY WOOD, author of "East Lynne," "Dene Hollow," &c.

UNA AND HER LIONS,
By MISS A. L. MUZZEY, author of "One Woman's Experience," "Jealousy," etc.

QUEEN COQUETTA.
By DAISY VENTNOR, author of "Prince Charming," etc., etc.

ONLY A WISH.
By A. M. DANA, author of "Jarring Chords, etc., etc.

MISSION WORK.
By Mrs. MARGARET HOSMER, author of "A Turn in Fortune's Wheel," etc., etc.

AN EVERY-DAY HEROINE.
By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "Solid Silver," "A Little Money," etc.

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Burnett's Cocoaine stops falling of the hair.

☞ In the recent marriage of Olive Logan, at New York, the promise of obedience was carefully omitted from the ceremony. The clergyman said that he had never married more than one woman who promised to obey, and she didn't.

OUR NEW DEPARTURE!

THE

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HALF A CENTURY OLD.

ENTIRELY NEUTRAL IN POLITICS

That well-known literary weekly, THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, having just completed its half-a-century of existence, has resolved to celebrate the event by

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ABLEST WRITERS

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NEW NOVELETS CONSTANTLY PUBLISHED.

New Novelets and Stories, long and short, are being continually published. Subscriptions, therefore, can begin at almost any time.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

As our enlarged paper will afford us the room, we shall devote about a column in every number to a summary of the most important and interesting news of the week.

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SINGLE COPIES 6 Cents.

EARLY CALLER.—At a recent trial in London a new "profession" was developed. A witness alleged that he was an "early caller," and that he supported himself by calling people in the morning. His business hours were from 1 A. M. till 5, and his first customers were bakers. The World thinks that Tennyson might enlist his services in behalf of the May Queen!

THE

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, DEC. 30, 1871.

ON GIVING CREDIT.

We have picked up at least a dozen of our exchanges lately containing a story called "The Ghost of Russian Hill," and in not one of them could we find the faintest allusion as to where the story originally came from. "The Ghost of Russian Hill" was written expressly for the "LADY'S FRIEND" by Mrs. Margaret Hosmer, and appeared in the number of that magazine for December, 1868. All the subscribers to THE LADY'S FRIEND must remember the story, and yet here it is going the rounds, seemingly appreciated by many, and yet without either the name of the author or the periodical for which she wrote it, accompanying it. It has always been the aim of the editress of the LADY'S FRIEND to get the very best literary matter of the kind the country could produce, and we think she has succeeded. Many a time have the charming little sketches of the magazine been copied by the publications of Field, Osgood & Co., of Boston, and Harper & Bros., New York, besides numerous other weeklies and monthlies of prominence, thus by their actions complimenting the excellence with which the stories are written. And yet they are generally silent upon the question of acknowledgment. In all fairness our friends of the press should at least give us credit for the beautiful novelets and sketches we procure at so much expense both for the LADY'S FRIEND and for THE POST.

LARGE CLUBS.

We hope that those of our readers who are in the habit of getting up Clubs for THE POST, will try to at least *double* their old lists. We are hoping to get a good many clubs of *fifty* subscribers for the coming year—and if the clubs should run up to *one hundred*, we should not complain. At the present enlarged size of THE POST, it is so much cheaper than the other first-class Family papers, that we think it only needs to be laid before the community to be subscribed for at once by thousands of new patrons. Of course we must depend, in a great degree, upon our present subscribers to show THE POST to their friends and neighbors, and speak a good word in our behalf.

A NEW NOVELET.

We shall commence in THE POST of January 6th—the first paper of the new year—a powerfully written novelet, called

THE SWAMP OUTLAWS;

OR,

A SECRET OF TWENTY YEARS.

BY CHARLES MORRIS.

This is a novelet of absorbing interest, and we think will be read with great delight by our readers.

As we expect to have a large demand for the early numbers of the year, we advise those who wish the opening chapters of this story to send in their subscriptions and orders as early as possible.

ANOTHER NOVELET.

About the first of February we also design commencing another novelet, entitled

SEVEN GRAVES;

OR,

THE HEIRS OF DUNLEATH.

BY ESTHER SERLE KENNETH.

This is a picturesque and fascinating story. Our readers will get some idea by these announcements of the rare treat we have prepared for them in the way of choice and captivating fiction. We are determined that during the year we shall enter upon in our next number, as in that now concluded, no paper in the country shall equal us in this line. The reputation of our stories has always been unrivalled, but in the whole long life of THE POST we do not think it has ever presented to its readers each week a more brilliant array of literary novelties than at present.

RENEW EARLY.

As we have a large number of subscribers whose subscriptions expire with the end of the year, we would suggest to all who can make it convenient, to renew as early in the present month as possible.

If everybody waits till the end of the month, a large number of names are sent in together, and it becomes impossible for our clerks to enter them as soon as they are received. This causes delay in mailing the paper, and sometimes errors; though our clerks are generally very careful, and when an error occurs the probabilities always are that it is the mistake of the subscriber, not theirs.

As we shall stop the paper hereafter, even more generally than heretofore, at the expiration of all subscriptions—excepting in the cases of a small class of old subscribers, who always remit in return to our bills—those who wish to avoid all danger of having a break in their files of THE POST, should remit early. We do not electrotype THE POST, and now that the paper is so large and expensive, we shall not run the risk of wasting papers by printing many more than we absolutely need.

THE GOLDEN RULE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

That's doin' as you'd be done by, of course, and I'd jest like to hear anybody say I hain't done it.

Sister Jane—that's my youngest sister, and there's nine of us—has jest lost her husband, and unfortunately, as the papers say, he wasn't covered by no insurance at all. So she's left with four little children to feed and clothe, and nothin' to do it with.

If I hadn't never heard of the golden rule I should have done jest the same, in other words, I should have rushed to the rescue, for isn't she my own *bilk and kin?* Goodness knows what *that* means! I don't; but I thought it sounded kind of nice, and so I put it in.

I was cleaning the pantry when the news come, and I knew I'd be expected to do something; so I concluded to get ahead of folk's *advice* for once in my life.

Of course I couldn't take either of the children, for I think it's a mortal sin to separate a mother from her children, and besides I'd jest had my house all new painted and bought new carpets, and them boys would have stomped 'em out in less'n no time. But I had jest set to one side a pile of cracked plates, a brown pitcher without a nose, and a tin pan that had a couple of holes in it. I grabbed 'em up without a minutes delay, and tucked a full pound of cheese and a lump of maple sugar as big as my two fists under my shawl, and run over with 'em.

What do you suppose she said? You'd a 'sposed she'd a fell on my neck and wept—me her own sister, sharin' my household goods with her before I'd even been asked! She did no such thing!

She smashed the plates onto the floor, and throwed the pan into the yard, and told me I was colder-hearted than a cabbage.

I went home a sadder but a wiser woman. Of course I didn't leave the cheese and sugar.

But I ain't sorry for trying to be generous. Good intentions never hurt nobody—at least, they never hurt me yet, and I have had my share of 'em. JERUSHA.

THE SEINE BY NIGHT.

At night, what a wonderful river this is! How dark and swift it flows under the gloomy arches of the bridges. It makes you shudder as you look at it. How the lights twinkle upon the bridges and along the quays, and reflect and multiply themselves in the sullen waters below! The heavy outlines of the Louvre rise grandly from the right shore, and the dark towers of the Conciergerie loom up sombrely in the distance on the south, while Notre Dame, faintly seen in the far back-ground, soars majestically towards Heaven.

See that little moving object, with its red and green eyes, darting towards us, puffing and panting like some fabled monster of the deep. It is a steamboat omnibus—and as we gaze at it, it is gone. The bridges are crowded, as in the day, with laughing, careless passers by. Ha! you heard a sigh from that poor woman who staggered past you—but it is lost in the laughter of a young girl, who speeds by on the arm of her lover. A white form gleams for a moment on the parapet you are leaning against, and before you can cry out, there is a splash in the water below, a hoarse gurgling sound as the waves close over their victim—and the Seine flows on as dark and as swift as it has flowed during all its nineteen hundred years. It is the old story repeated year after year. The city has changed, but the dark waters still remain the last refuge of the despairing.

WAITING FOR THE BRIDE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY SARA T. SMITH.

Light all the lamps, Margretta!
And make that fire burn bright,
And have the supper ready,—
It's very cold to-night,
Ask Patrick if he's *certain*
The gates are opened wide,
For in an hour—remember—
My son brings home his bride.

An hour! They'll come at seven,
And now it's after six,
Poor Will! I've missed him sadly,
With all his merry tricks!
I hope—I *know* he's happy,
And yet I say "Poor Will!"
Ah, well! a mother's darling,
To a mother's baby still.

And marriage is so solemn—
Sometimes so sad a thing!
All blessings and all curses
Bound in a little ring!
A little ring that wears away
In daily toil and fret,
And leaves, sometimes, instead of gold,
A scar of vain regret.

But then—he's chosen wisely
Even in mother's eyes.
She's pretty, and although so young,
In many things she's wise;
They speak of her with ready praise,
The ones who know her best.
He loves her and he's chosen her—
I hope she'll make him blest!

I see the moonlight, shining
Across the quiet lawn.
The trees are still and beautiful,
Although the leaves are gone.
It rained upon the wedding-day,
But cleared before the night,—
I'm glad their coming-home will be
So peaceful and so bright!

There's trial before them, I suppose—
And joy, and loss, and gain.
It's good to think that Healing walks
So near the angel Pain!
The Lord has blest me greatly,
Yet He has sent me grief;
And I know how sweet the moment,
When Sorrow meets Relief!

They're coming now! I hear the wheels,
And at the open door
Stands one who's been my Comforter
These thirty years and more.
When I look back along my life,
With husband at my side,
I'm glad indeed, I've lived to see
My son bring home his bride!

GOSSIP FOR LADIES.

THE CITY FASHIONS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST—Holiday season is with us once more, and before launching off into matters pertaining to dress, I know I ought to say something pretty about Christmas. However, there are too many people at work on that subject just now, and in the light of such genius as will soon blaze forth, I know I should be compelled to "pale my ineffectual fires" or—fire my ineffectual pails, so I will let Christmas alone to be worked up into rhymes by those who take a yearly hack at the business. It seems strange about it, that everybody that can make a jingle of words, writes a poem at Christmas. There must be inspiration in the air, I guess! How modest they are about it too! They say they attach no credit to themselves for the result of their efforts—they assume it is a power greater than themselves—a something above and beyond them. I don't wonder they hate to take the blame and responsibility of such trash as we sometimes see, but if they are compelled by this "What you call it"—outside and above them—to write, does the same ambitious spirit, or whatever it may be, insist upon having its efforts published? and if so, what is the occion of its spite against the human race anyhow?

HOLIDAY GIFTS

show up in great beauty and profusion this year. The market is full of novelties for "the ladies, God bless them!" but the gentlemen, poor fellows! will have to be content, I suppose, with the usual number of smoking-caps, dressing-gowns, cigar-cases, and slippers.

I should hate to be a bachelor at Christmas time—I should hate to be one at any time for that matter; but at Christmas when the cape and things begin to come in with the compliments of Maud and Sadie, and Ella and Anna, the position must be eminently trying. It is well enough for the first five or six years, but after that, when gold tasselled smoking caps confront him at every turn, when slippers dance hornpipes and Virginia reels all over the house, while every closet is stowed full of trunks closely packed with superfluous dressing gowns and camphor; trunks that when opened emit a sickly sepulchral odor suggestive of a preserved corpse, or some other cheerful thing, I should suppose he would begin to regard Christmas as a sort of an affliction. But I presume if he should refuse anything and plead indisposition as the cause; the sympathetic donors one and all would assume he was suffering from influenza, and come down on him at once with a cargo of initial handkerchiefs, with the poor alphabet tortured into all shapes, and brought out in every color of the rainbow. Though now that I think of it, there is a relief from the dressing gown with its big palm leaves and general sickly air, and it consists in what is popularly called a smoking jacket. It is not altogether a new idea, but never before this season have they been brought out in such perfection and elegance. The most beautiful and expensive ones are of Lyons velvet with collar, cuffs and lining of quilted satin in blue or scarlet. They are cut in loose sack form, and are stylish, costly and comfortable—three excellent reasons why a bachelor should not grumble if he receives one anonymously.

It is a fine present from a wife to a beloved husband, because you see it is all in the family, and if the aforementioned beloved husband don't behave himself, the aforementioned wife can cut it up into a magnificent cloak for herself.

Among young people it is too expensive, and no lady should be sufficiently in love to present a smoking jacket of the above description—it won't pay, unless she knows exactly what she is about. It would be fearfully exasperating to see the future Mrs. B.'s children toddling around in daintily trimmed sacques made out of the identical jacket she had presented to the happy father when he was a forlorn bachelor. I am assuming the future Mrs. B. is not the donor by any means.

NOVELTIES IN DRESS

are always plenty at this season, though the latest thing that has appeared in fashionable society is a dress, the train of which was composed entirely of peacock feathers, and the ear-rings and necklace of the wearer, and the aigrette for the hair were composed of pendants in the shape of a peacock, studded with diamonds, emeralds and rubies to imitate the plumage of that gorgeous bird. It is stated that the dress was extremely elegant, but I heard no compliment to the quiet taste of the wearer, nor do I know whether, after the fashion of that gaudy bird, she looked at her feet and dropped her feathers.

BRIDAL DRESSES

this season are mostly of tulle, puffed and flounced and elaborately trimmed with point lace, satin ribbon and orange blossoms, and are infinitely more becoming than silk, satin or velvet.

OPERA CLOAKS,

always important items of the wardrobe, show one new style—made in heavy white silk, with two circular capes which may be trimmed with either elegant binding or rich point or thread lace. They call it the "Imperial," but no matter so that it isn't the "Nilsson." And that leads me to remark that I look upon the visit of the Grand Duke to this country as a benefaction—though, like the taking of Wilmington, it was "a blessing in disguise."

Only for him we should have been "Nilssoned" to death; now, everything is named for the latest "distress." A new perfume is called the "Duke's boquet," and it is needless to say that the ladies, one and all, are crazy over it—a new color is "Alexis blue," while in muffs and bonnets and everything else there is the "Russian," the "Czar," the "Romanoff," and Fashion herself hardly knows what all they haven't got in the way of names.

I even saw a gentleman's

OVERCOAT

the other day that some aspiring clothier had christened the "St. Petersburg." It was an Esquimaux beaver trimmed with sealskin. The name is appropriate enough, I suppose, unless the wearer should be so unfortunate as to set it afire, then "Moscow" would be better.

ITEMS.

It is the fashion this year for gentlemen to marry ladies several years older than themselves.

Double bracelets are now all the rage—one worn at the wrist, the other above the elbow, fastened together by a heavy chain.

Six button gloves are the only ones considered *comme il faut* for full dress.

Yellow and blue are the favorite combination of color for reception dresses this season.

OLIVE KING.

"Kleptomania" vs. "Affinity."

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ELLA WHEELER.

I have a very nice point for you to decide, Mr. SAT. EVE. POST. A very nice point indeed. I have studied upon it, and can arrive at no satisfactory conclusion myself. It is a subject which has at times agitated the public mind, or rather the minds of scientific and learned men. You have, of course, heard of the famous disease "Kleptomania," and you know men of science have made it something of a study. You no doubt have heard, too, of "Affinities." That is, two people who are exactly alike in every respect, who think the same thoughts at the same time, etc. The case in point is either one or the other, and I don't know which; and what I want you to decide for me is, whether it is a case of "Kleptomania" or a case of "Affinity."

On Thanksgiving Day we had some friends take dinner with us. After dinner, we were scattered about, in groups, and as I chatted with Mrs. B., I idly turned the leaves of "Wood's Magazine for December." As I did so, my eyes fell upon a little poem, by "Wm. H. Haven," (as the book said). The first line sounded very familiar. I read on, and it sounded more and more familiar; so familiar, that I remember writing a poem *exactly* like it last January. I handed the book to Mrs. B. I went to my secretary, and took therefrom a MS. book, wherein I always copy my poems before sending them for publication. I turned the leaves till I found a poem written by me Jan. 20, 1871, and requesting Mrs. B. to keep her eye on "Mr. Haven's" poem, began to read. Strange coincidence! they were exactly alike! They were twins! but mine was nearly a year the older! I had sent it last January to "Frank Leslie" of New York. He had paid me for it, along with several others, and it was published in "The Chimney Corner" of the June following, of course without my name attached—after the abominable and unjust and unreasonable habit of half our leading publications. And now, here I saw it in "Wood's Magazine," credited to one "Wm. H. Haven," who is either my "Affinity," with a mind which thinks what mine thinks, imagines what mine imagines, or is badly affected with "Kleptomania."

I wrote the surprising coincidence to Mr. Wood, who will no doubt be as much *amused* as I was, and am. I also wrote to Mr. Leslie, who informs me that he is ready to prove with dates and figures that I did send him the poem, and that it did appear in the "Chimney Corner."

Now here is a study for the lovers of the marvellous. For is it not marvellous that two people who never heard of each other should write the *same poem*, word for word, and even give it the same title? "William H. Haven" is undoubtedly my "affinity," or else, as I said before, he has the new disease "kleptomania" *bad!* And I would like to know which it is. In case it is the latter, I think he ought to have something done for him immediately before he gets any worse. For aught I know this is the first symptom he has shown of the fatal disease. I do not know where he abides or I would send him medical assistance. But I am in hopes Mr. Wood may know, and if so, I am sure he will act as medical adviser, and apply a remedy that will at least *quiet* the disease. That is if it is "kleptomania." Of course if he is an "affinity" there is nothing that can be done for him. He will have to keep on, I suppose, forever writing just the poems I write, only a *year later!*

And now here is another question! If he—William H. Haven, my affinity—supposing him to be that instead of a kleptomaniac, if, I say, he and I should meet, what would be the result? I have heard it argued that we all have our affinities somewhere in the world, and if we and they live long enough we shall meet, as we are constantly nearing; that the reason we do not all meet our exact counterparts on earth, is because one of the number dies too soon. Well now, supposing Mr. Haven and I both live, and in the course of time meet, what will be the result? Comstock's Philosophy says: "If two moving bodies strike each other obliquely, they will be thrown out of the line of their former direction." Well, perhaps that *would* be the result, but I am inclined to think it would be "instant annihilation" of *one* of the bodies rather, and that one wouldn't be *me!* So, Mr. Haven, I advise you to keep out of the way of your affinity, or die off, or do almost *anything* to avoid a collision.

WHEN a woman makes up her mind to have anything she is pretty sure to get it. Probably that assertion will not be disputed. At any rate an illustration of its truth comes from Cincinnati. The good dame of a citizen of that place could not persuade her spouse to get her a patent clothes-dryer. So she took the pole out from her old-fashioned line the other evening, and crouching down behind the fence screamed "murder." In an instant her startled lord came flying out of the house, was caught across the throat by the clothes-line, and before he could recover himself it had nearly sawed his head off. The next morning a sombre-looking individual, with his neck all done up in cloths and bandages, was seen putting up a patent clothes-dryer in that yard.

☞ Boarding-school Miss—"Oh, Charlie, I expect to graduate at next commencement." "Graduate—what will you graduate in?" "Why, in white tulle." Fact.

FAITHLESS.

Her white, white hand upon my shoulder lies;
Quick fires come and go within her eyes;
Her curved red lips are smiling as of old.
Bright blushes rise and fade upon her cheek,
As if the flame of conscious love must speak,
Then hide itself because too much was told.

Half pleading and half petulant she stands;
Her rippling hair falls down upon my hands;
Her words are whispered in their old sweet tone.
But neither word nor smile can move me now;
There is an unseen shadow on her brow;
I cannot love, because my trust is gone

MARGARET; OR, ROSAMOND.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CLIO STANLEY.

They were sisters, yet as unlike as sisters ever were known to be in family annals or in the famed family portraits.

Margaret Tobarr was dark and proud, and in her cheeks the red blushes always burned like signal fires; while Rosamond was fair and petite, with timid blue eyes, and gold brown hair falling in large curls about her face, hiding with its glittering threads the faint dawn of crimson on her cheeks, as the brown nest of the robin hides the sweet red on its breast.

Rosamond stood by the window, looking out on the fair lawn and gardens, bright with the last glow of sunset, and with a proud sweep of her silken garments, Margaret crossed the room to where her sister stood.

"Rose," she said sharply, tell me at least if you have decided?"

"Hush, Margaret," she said imploringly; "you must know it is not an easy thing for me to give up this one love of my life to you! It has been the charm of every bright day, and the comfort of every lonely one. You know Phave had no one else to love me since our mother died."

"You are quickly comforted in sorrow, Rose, but a real disappointment would *kill* all that is good in me."

"How do you *know* that Philip would love you, if I should go away and leave him free?" Rosamond asked, faltering and dropping her eyes before her sister's passionate glance. "If I thought"—she said, hardly above her breath.

"How do I know it?" Margaret repeated, the proud light deepening in her eyes; "has not every man whom I have admitted here for these three years of mourning, become either my slave or my lover? It is only your white, baby face that has blinded Philip Evelyn to my love! If you go away with no farewell to him, he will be *my* lover when you return."

"And what would you do then?" faltered Rose. "You are *very* proud, Margaret, and Philip is a poor man, rich only in his gift of song and in winning all hearts to praises."

"But *I* have money," Margaret returned, haughtily. Our grandfather's gift has made me a rich woman. I will go to Paris, *as his wife*, before three months have gone by."

Rosamond shuddered; for she knew that the fatal passion which had possession of her sister's soul was not real love, but would fade like an idle dream before the stern realities of life. And she clung to the sweet belief that Philip Evelyn would not suffer his love to be won by so frail a passion.

She hesitated no longer, but lifted her radiant eyes to her sister's face.

"I do not give him up, Margaret. No power on earth could compel me to my that! But I will go away as you wish, without bidding him good-by, and you may have the opportunity you desire."

"Thank you, darling!" said Margaret, her voice softening a little as she watched her sister's pale face, from which every trace of color had fled. "You will find consolation in some new friendship, and when we are married, you shall go with us to Paris. Perhaps you may wear a title yet!"

"Don't, Margaret. You hurt me with your cruel words. Go now, and leave me alone for a little while."

"Well, I will go. Shall I tell papa of your contemplated journey?"

"I will tell him myself in the morning."

"Will you see Philip, if he comes to-night?" Margaret asked doubtfully.

One meeting now might mean so much!

"Ask him to excuse me," she replied a little sadly. "I have a headache, and I shall be busy."

That evening Rosamond kept her room, only going out into the hall when Philip Evelyn went home to listen to the music of his voice and step.

"Tell Rose," he was saying, "that I am sorry for her headache. But truth compels me, Miss Margaret—I have passed two delightful hours this evening."

Poor Rose! With trembling steps she crept back to her room, and pressing both hands to her throbbing heart, threw herself on her knees before the window, letting the cool wind ripple across her face.

"Perhaps I have been wrong, after all," she said, with a half sob in her voice, "and Margaret may win him to love her. But, God bless my darling with happiness, whichever he may choose!"

The next day she packed her trunk and started for a month's visit to her mother's sister, her Aunt Rose, for whom she had been named.

"A month from to-day I shall come back," she whispered to her sister, as she stood on the steps, the sunlight falling lovingly down on her sweet face. "If you get your heart's desire, dear Margaret, I shall *try* not to be unhappy."

The month rolled rapidly away. Rosamond, in the clear, fresh country air, was getting roses in place of her lilies, while Margaret at home was growing pale with anxiety.

It was the morning of the last day of the month. All the morning she had wandered aimlessly up and down the garden paths, haunted by a fear that she would not acknowledge even to her own heart.

"When Rose comes back! when Rose comes back!" she whispered to her heart.

And her heart had answered back: "What if Rose should not come back!"

Within one mad hour she had taken steps towards the accomplishment of her wish. A man who had once been in her father's employ, but had been discharged for ill conduct, had been for some days lurking about the place. She went to see him at once, and confided to him her plans.

"You don't want her hurt?" he said, when at length he understood her.

"No."

"Only shut up somewhere or another until after you are married?"

"Yes."

"I could take her to my mother's, up to Greyfoot mountain. She's rough, but she'd treat her well if she was paid for it, and never let her out of her sight until you gave your orders."

"That will do," she said quickly. "And now you must make haste, for she will be at the East village at sundown. Father does not know she is coming. I promised to send some one to meet her, and I choose to send *you*. Here is a purse with fifty dollars in it. On my wedding day you shall have a hundred."

Cautiously she found her way back to the house, and Oscar Durm went on his unholy errand, neither of them noticing the pale, motionless figure, which stood like a frozen thing behind the clump of fir trees.

"And she is her sister!" he muttered, when the blood began to flow again through the chilled veins. "The same blood warms their bodies. Ah! can it be possible I have heard aright? Am I not rather in a dream?" He looked about him, stooped and picked a bit of fringed silk from a rose bush growing on one side of the path, and held it against his sleeve. "No," he groaned. "It is a horrible reality! This has been torn from her shawl—the very one she wore when we walked in the garden last night. Thank God, I never loved *her!*"

And following with rapid steps the path which Oscar Durm had taken, he too left the garden.

It was long past twilight. The shadows were clinging to everything out of doors. Gloomily lurking under the old oak tree, steadily asserting their right to the pleasantest side of the house, keeping close to the stone wall of the garden, hiding under the heavy window ledges, and nestling under each bush and blossom on the lawn. Indoors they crept about more stealthily, flickering doubtfully in the far corners of the room.

Up and down—up and down—from one window to another, a silent figure was pacing.

Her feet fell softly in among the roses of the royal Wilton, until as a thought of defeat flashed through her brain, she ground her heel down among the rose-red blossoms as if hating the sight of their innocent beauty.

Suddenly she paused before a mirror that ran from floor to ceiling, and gazed at her own dark face reflected in the glass, while a faint shadow stole across it.

"No, I am not as beautiful as Rose; I know it, in spite of the flattery of a dozen lovers. I can read the truth here, for this dumb thing will not lie!"

Once more she turned back as far as the window, and lifting the curtain with her jewelled hands, pressed her cheek against the cool glass.

"It is three years since our mother died; yet I saw her last night, as she used to look when she stood at the garden fence, and smiled so fondly at little Rose. She never gave me a tithe of the love she lavished on her pale darling. She would take all the love from me wo.th having! Ought I not to hate her?"

The breath came quick and fierce from between her handsome white teeth, and she did not hear the door as it opened softly behind her.

"Oh, Philip, it seems so good to be at home again! And how kind of Margaret to send you for me! Does she guess our secret, dear?"

"No, my darling, I would not tell her until I could gain the assurance of your love from your own dear lips. Oh, Rose, Rose, you are rose of the world to me!"

They were startled from the avowal of a love that had withdrawn their thoughts from everything else, by the sudden noise of a window being raised.

Rosamond turned her head and saw her sister's dress below the curtain.

"Dear Margaret!" she exclaimed, springing half-way across the room.

But she stopped there with a shriek of dismay. One instant, Margaret Tobarr had held apart the heavy curtains, gazing at her sister's innocent, love-lighted countenance—then with a face livid as death, and full of a fearful hatred, she had turned and leaped from the window to certain death.

It was a year longer before Philip Evelyn won his rose from the garden world of fair women; it was a lifetime before Rose could forget her sister's fate!

Did she forget it even then!

CATHEDRAL BELLS.

The inhabitants of Limerick are proud of their cathedral bells; and well they may be, for they are passing sweet. They boast that they were brought from Italy, and tell of their having occupied the skill of a clever young artist for some years. By the time he had manufactured them, their chime had taken such possession of his heart, that he resolved never to leave them; so that when he sold them to the prior of the convent, he removed to their neighborhood, that he might still hear their music; he hoped they would toll his requiem.

Troubles came—he lost his property—the convent was laid waste—the bells were taken away—and this grieved the artist more than any of his losses. He wandered over the countries of Europe, hoping to reach the spot where his bells might be.

Years after they had been manufactured, it happened towards the close of spring, on a lovely evening, a vessel had anchored at some distance from Limerick, and a boat was seen to glide from it along the Shannon. It had been hired by one of the passengers—the Italian artist—now grown old and gray. He was impatient to reach the city to which he had traced his much loved bells.

As they rowed along the smooth waters, the steeple of the cathedral appeared in the distance, above the surrounding buildings. The boatman pointed it out to the stranger as he sat in the stern; he fixed his eyes earnestly and fondly upon it.

The boat glided on, but all at once, through the stillness of the hour, the peal from the sweet cathedral bells burst upon the air; the artist crossed his hands upon his breast, and leaned back. The shore was reached. The face of the Italian was still turned towards the cathedral; but the spirit had fled, and the bells tolled his requiem!

PRUSSIAN MANNERS.

It is well known that marriage in Prussia has come to be looked upon as a luxury to be indulged in only by the better circumstanced. The large number of servants, waiters, day-laborers and others without any regular trade, rarely marry at all. They find it enough to earn a decent living for themselves. Those who do marry wait until about the twenty-seventh year. If he is a merchant, he must wait until his business is established; if a professional man, until he has a good practice or position. Every class, as a rule, marries late, for that which is necessary with the poor has, from its generality, come to be regarded as a custom for all.

It is not customary, as in America, for young gentlemen and ladies to associate much together, since the expenses of gallantry are thought beyond their means. Young men go with young men, and live in clubs or bachelor bands, where each one pays his own expenses, and lives as economically as he can. When they seek female company, which is only now and then, it is at the public balls or in worse connections. This custom has become so established that it works the other way, and no young lady who values her reputation will allow herself to be seen alone in company with a gentleman before she is engaged to him, and before the engagement is duly published in the press. The formalities of betrothal are celebrated in the presence of her friends. They much wonder at the liberty of American young women in Germany, who allow themselves to go with any young gentlemen acquaintance whatever, being one evening with one and the next evening with another.

☞ A story comes from Fitchburg, Massachusetts, that a cat lay down in a fly-wheel early in the morning, and was not discovered till the engine had been running three hours; a dog then detected her and gave the alarm. When the engine was stopped, the cat was rescued uninjured, after making sixty revolutions a minute for three hours.

☞ A young lady innocently writes to a friend: "Miss Smith is staying with us. We went out sailing yesterday. I didn't know there was so much in her."

WAITING.

Now since we two have counted up the cost
And pain of waiting till our chance is found
(Some broader chance than say we have lost
Must come to meet us as the years go round);
And since we know each heart will stand the test
Of absence and of waiting; since we know
That all love's whirl of passion and unrest
Was calmed for us by duty long ago,
And since we know the past's beyond recall,
We must accept the fruit of its mistakes;
And trust the dim "to come," to give us all
We dare not covet now for home's sake,
And till that sure time comes, dear love, we must
In God, in love, and in each other trust.

And it will dawn for us, that happy day,
When love shall overleap whatever lies
Between our lives, and we shall find our way
To joys repaying every sacrifice.
We have so little in the present now,
We have so much to hope from time to come
We can afford to wait; our true love vow
Binds us forever, though our lips be dumb.
We take our stand upon each other's faith,
We know each other to be true as steel,
We hold each other's future; life or death
Can neither mar nor alter aught we feel.
We work apart, till love, our harvest's lord,
To reap our fruit together gives the word.

GYP.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY PRESLEY W. MORRIS.

CHAPTER I.

She was standing by the roadside, with her sun-bonnet thrown back, exposing her face fully. She made a very pretty picture, standing there in the shade of a huge mulberry tree. Yet I can't say that she was particularly beautiful; any one undertaking to analyze her features would not have found her so. Still hers was a bright and attractive face.

The young girl's name was Gyp Kingsbury, "at your service," as she would have said. She was twenty, and seemingly without a care; a merry, laughing, mischievous girl. Everybody who knew Gyp liked her.

She was the Widow Kingsbury's daughter; and her mother resided in the outskirts of the pleasant country town, Reesville, that was visible three-quarters of a mile away. Gyp had only that morning returned to her home from a visit, of a few weeks' duration, to some friends in the city, and this was of course her first ramble since her return.

She was standing idly playing with a leaf that she had plucked, when the clatter of horses' hoofs struck her attention.

Soon she beheld, coming along the road, two horsemen. Passing close to her, one of them accidentally dropped his whip. At the same moment he saw Gyp.

"My little Miss," he said, (Gyp was exactly five feet in height,) "will you pick up my whip for me?"

Gyp looked first at the man, who was young, and tolerably handsome, and then at the whip, hesitating for a moment. Then she advanced to where it was lying, and lifted it in her hand.

"Give it to me, please," said the young man, a little impatiently, as she still held it.

Gyp was standing by the side of his horse. With a low laugh, she suddenly gave the animal a cut across the flank.

Stung with pain, the horse gave a leap forward, and sped away swiftly.

"There! I hope that will learn him some gallantry," cried Gyp, hotly.

The horse had galloped a hundred yards before his rider succeeded in reining him in. Gyp threw the whip on the ground, and looked at the remaining gentleman a little defiantly, as if she expected him to ask her to hand it to him.

"Served him right," laughed that personage, in a clear, ringing tone.

Gyp could not help seeing that he possessed a frank, handsome face—one that showed intellect; clearly a face whose owner had an element of fun and mischief about him.

"I shall plague Edwards about this," he continued, as he dismounted to get the whip; "he deserves to have it thrown in his face every day for a month."

But Gyp was reticent, having nothing more to say. After he had remounted, he looked for a moment in her face, as if he wished to speak; but he did not, probably thinking it might be dangerous to do so. So with an admiring glance at the animated face of the girl, he rode away.

"I say, Edwards," he said, as he came up to that gentleman, who was waiting, "here's your whip."

"So I see," Edwards responded; "the little vixen. Who do you suppose she is, Waldron?"

"I am sure I don't know. I told her that she had served you right—and I repeat the same to you."

"Confound her! she might have broken my neck."

"She didn't look as if she was suffering much remorse, for the danger to which she had exposed you, when I left." Waldron laughed.

"I supposed—"

"That she was some simple little country girl ready to do the bidding of a gentleman like Frank Edwards," interrupted Waldron. "My dear fellow, you seem to have made a mistake, and now confess that you admire her spunk after all, will you not?"

"Enough, Waldron. It's a very small matter anyway, I suppose, and we'll say no more about it."

"I presume that's about the correct view," Waldron returned. "I don't suppose that your neck was in any great danger."

Gyp had remained standing beneath the trees, watching Edwards and Waldron as they rode toward the town.

"I wonder who they are?" she murmured to herself. "I suppose they think I am very rude. I ought to be ashamed of myself, but I couldn't help that."

And Gyp laughed gleefully as she thought of Edwards's horse galloping rapidly away against the will of its rider.

"Wouldn't it be odd" she continued, "if those are some of mother's summer boarders. I'll wager my new cameo set that they are. It will be very amusing if they are. Yet it is barely probable that they are, and more likely that they are travellers. Still it may be just as I have said, and they may have arrived while I have been gone. I will go home, and if I must indeed meet them, why—oh ho! I guess I am able to take care of myself. I expect it will be slightly embarassing for us all, any way."

And Gyp laughed once more her clear, melodious laugh, as in imagination she beheld the meeting of herself and these two gentlemen in her own home, with the probability that they might be occupants of that home for several weeks.

Mrs. Kingsbury, Gyp's mother was a lady of considerable means, but still every summer she kept a lot of boarders from the city, who came out to Reesville in search of country pleasures. She had done this for years, scarcely knowing why she had first been prevailed upon to do so, keeping it up afterwards because she had got into the habit of it, and because people seemed to expect to stay with her when they came to Reesville. If she had had to keep them for nothing in return even, which she didn't, I don't think she would have refused to do so, for she was somewhat fond of company, and enjoyed the visits of these temporary sojourners. And it was highly probable that what Gyp had anticipated might be true, for though some of Mrs. Kingsbury's boarders would return summer after summer, some would occasionally drop away, while others would likewise be added.

Gyp wended her way homeward. Reaching it, she saw neither of the two gentlemen. She ran upstairs to her room to dress for dinner, as it was nearing that hour.

She came down shortly, dressed in a manner that rendered her doubly attractive. If she wasn't pretty, there was something extremely bewitching in her manner and appearance—a charm in face and figure that could draw many to her, irresistibly.

Going into the parlor, she found there a dozen different persons, most of whom she knew, and whom she greeted accordingly. Presently a gentleman was presented to her, Mr. Edwards, as she distinguished his name. Glancing into his face, it was as much as she could do to avoid smiling, as she recognized him immediately as the person who had so gallantly asked her to reach him his whip. It seemed as if he did not recognize her, as he made no sign.

A moment later another gentleman was presented to her. It was Mr. Waldron this time. *He* did recognize her, she was positive, for she saw the shadow of an amused smile playing about his lips. She was conscious of a blush, and meeting his eye something made her feel sorry, for the first time, for what she had done.

It was after dinner when Waldron and Edwards were sauntering, together, over Mrs. Kingsbury's grounds, that Edwards said:

"I say, Waldron, it strikes me that I have met that Miss Kingsbury some place before."

"I don't doubt but that you have," Waldron answered, dryly.

"But I can't remember where, to save my neck."

"Perhaps I can assist your memory," Waldron said.

And he laughed outright.

"I don't see anything laughable," Mr. Edwards observed, a little ill-humoredly.

"Ha! ha! Edwards; she is your vixen, as you called her, that taught you a lesson in gallantry to-day. You remember her now, I'm sure."

"The deuce!" ejaculated Edwards, in astonishment; "of course I do, and I'm most decidedly sorry. Fine looking girl, too. Well, I'll apologise to her, and I hope that will be satisfactory. Pshaw, who would have thought of such a thing!"

CHAPTER II.

"Tom, Tom Waldron."

"Well?"

"I'm in love."

"So I supposed, from your conduct of the last few days. What are you going to do about it?"

"Propose, I suppose—pshaw! I don't know. The truth is, I'm in a quandary. That girl has beaten me in everything, from the day that she lashed Prince till he wanted to run away, till now. The second day of our acquaintance she beat me playing croquet—you know I am pretty hard to beat at that—and has continued to do so. Then at chess it was the same thing. Yesterday, you remember, we got into an argument about a French phrase. I was positive that I was right, but, confound it, she proved that I wasn't."

"And that she was."

"Of course."

And Mr. Frank Edwards, for it was he, leaned back in his seat, and puffed out a cloud of smoke from his fragrant Havana. The two young men were together in Tom Waldron's room, conversing, no doubt, about matters of mutual interest.

"So it's a hopeless case, is it?" Tom asked.

"Yes, it is," Frank answered; "if any one had told me that day that the girl whom I took for a little country gypsy would be loved madly by me, I would have called him a lunatic or a fool. But I love her truly, Tom; and you know that, though I am a little wild and giddy at times, that—"

"How about Ella Parsons?" Tom asked, laughing. "Do you remember when you vowed to me by all that was good and bad that you loved her with all the strength of your passionate heart, and yet—"

"Confound it, Waldron, that was last summer, and circumstances separating us before I made my declaration, I discovered that I was mistaken."

"As you will, no doubt, discover *next* summer about *this* affair, unless you do go the whole length now, and Miss Kingsbury teaches you that you *are* mistaken."

"I say, Waldron," Frank said, crossly, "what possesses you to turn against me in that style? 'Pon my word, I thought you were my most devoted friend."

"So am I, my dear boy. But I haven't forgotten that pretty Miss Parsons, whose gentle heart, I have no doubt, you learned, flirt that you are, to respond with its beatings to your very tread. You'll discover now that you are not contending against one like her, but against a foeman worthy of your steel. And I don't care much if you are routed as disastrously as you were upon that first day that you met her."

There was a silence. Frank was in deep meditation. Presently he ejaculated one word:

"Waldron."

"What?"

"Do you believe she loved me?"

"Ella Parsons!"

"Yes."

"I don't doubt it."

"By Jove, if I thought she did I'd hunt her up yet, and ask her to marry me. Yet—not so, I *can't*, for I love Miss Kingsbury."

"At any rate, Miss Parsons will be here to-*morrow*, which piece of intelligence I take pleasure in communicating to you."

"The mischief!" Frank ejaculated; "who told you so?"

"I have it direct from Mrs. Kingsbury, who most certainly would not have said it unless it was true."

"I'll be hanged, Tom, what am I to do?" And Mr. Edwards blew the smoke from his cigar higher than ever, while a puzzled expression crept over his face.

"I can answer your query very easily," Tom said; "propose to her, instead of Miss Kingsbury."

"I won't do it, I tell you; I won't do it," Frank cried, seemingly as much distressed as though Tom's advice was a command that was to be obeyed positively, whether he wished or not. "I have said that I love Miss Kingsbury; that ought to be sufficient."

"And I'll wager that you marry Miss Parsons," Tom said quietly.

Frank looked at him with a kind of helpless *stare*.

"I repeat," Tom uttered, "that you will yet marry Miss Parsons. I feel that I am something of a seer this afternoon, and my words are truth. Mark them."

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Tom Waldron made a discovery; that discovery was that he was in love himself with Gyp Kingsbury. A mysterious influence had reached his heart that made this merry, mischievous girl seem the dearest of all the world to him.

Of course, when he realized this, Frank's chances of winning her became greatly magnified in his eyes; whereas, as we have seen, he had before predicted a far different result. Tom was only human, and the smiles that she bestowed upon Frank tormented him very much. I may as well state here that Gyp and the last mentioned young gentleman were on quite friendly terms, in spite of the somewhat unpropitious beginning of their acquaintance. As to whether or not there was any probability of Gyp's loving him will be developed presently.

Tom loved Gyp truly. Isn't that saying enough in regard to his love? I think it is.

Miss Ella Parsons had come on the day that Tom stated she would. Dear reader, between you and me, she was a very pretty and sweet little woman, and Frank Edwards would have done very well to have won her. Further, she did indeed love him, not with a fiery and passionate love, but still with the strength of her gentle heart, a love that was probably none the less true and enduring on account of its gentleness. She was just the girl for Frank, quiet and yielding in her ways, and would, no doubt, always believe in him fully, not even considering his frequently wayward fancies anything but wisdom.

But Frank did not just at this time see matters in their true light. O no! He had got an idea into his head that he loved Gyp to distraction, and there was no telling where that idea might lead him. So matters stood, when one afternoon Frank rushed into Tom's room, exclaiming as he seated himself:

"Old fellow, I've endured suspense long enough, and I am going to propose the very first opportunity."

"Humph!" ejaculated Tom, as he stood before a glass fastening on a necktie.

"You needn't be as cross as a bear about it," Frank said. "You might wish me success at least."

"Miss Kingsbury, Miss Parsons, and one or two others, are going to have a game of croquet," Tom put in; "I am going to play. They told me to hunt you up, and bring you along; will you go?"

"Confound it, yes," Frank muttered, "but—"

"Propose as soon as you want to," Tom cried, "and don't bother me about it."

Frank opened his eyes to their widest extent.

"I'll be hanged," he exclaimed, "if I don't believe you want her yourself."

"If I did I don't suppose I could get her. Go on with your intentions of proposing, my dear boy. I assure you that I shall not try to interfere. I give you the field. There! I hope that satisfies you."

"Perfectly satisfactory, Tom, old fellow," Frank said. "I didn't have any idea that your crusty old heart was touched. I just said that on the impulse of the moment."

Tom might have added that if Frank should find that Miss Gyp did not love him, that *he* intended to use all the means in his power to win her love. But he did not consider it necessary to say aught of this. The two young men went out on the croquet ground, where they found the young ladies all ready for the game. Tom Waldron was in no very great flow of spirits, all on account of Gyp Kingsbury. He was realizing how terribly blank the future would be if he should not obtain her love. He asked himself what hope he would have of winning that love. Why the chance of Frank's doing so seemed tenfold greater than his own.

And for some reason or another this afternoon she was very gracious toward Frank, while she scarcely noticed Tom. It had been a great deal that way all the time latterly.

"I wish them happiness if she loves him," Tom thought; "at any rate I shall keep my word and leave the field to him till he decides his fate. He avowed his intention to me, and I will not do the least thing to thwart him."

After the game was finished, Tom strolled off up to the house in company with Miss Parsons. Going into the parlor with her they found half a dozen others there. For some time he conversed gayly enough, and then slipping away went up to his room.

He threw himself on a sofa with a sigh. He was very desperately melancholy this afternoon, that's all there was of it. Frank was a good fellow, but—

"Lucky dog if he wins her," Tom murmured. "It will go hard with me, but I'll bear it like a man."

It was singular that while but a short time before he had laughed at Frank's chance of success, that now he seemed to have no doubt of it.

He had been lying on the sofa for a long time—he scarcely knew how long—when Frank came into the room again.

"I've done it," he cried immediately.

"What?" Tom asked, feeling that his heart must be beating almost audibly.

"Proposed, to be sure."

"Well?"

Frank came over and stood close to Tom.

"She refused me," he said.

Tom Waldron had no desire to rejoice in any person's ill luck, but he could not avoid a feeling of intense relief just at this moment. He said nothing. Frank stooped over him, and said in a half tragical, half comical sort of way:

"I think that after all I have made a mistake."

Still Tom did not seem to have anything to say.

"Tom!" said Frank.

"I am listening," Tom answered.

"You said Ella Parsons loved me. Do you believe so still?"

"I have scarcely a doubt but that she does."

Frank wasn't looking as sorrowful as a man who has just been rejected might look. On the contrary, his countenance was quite animated.

"By Jove! Tom," he exclaimed, "I've been a fool all this time."

With these words he started from the apartment.

"Frank, hold on," Tom cried.

Frank stopped, and Tom continued:

"What are you going to do?"

"You'll see," was the answer.

"Frank, you expressed the idea a few hours ago that I was in love with Miss Kingsbury myself. I evaded you, neither saying that I was or wasn't. But I am. I am going to ask her to marry me. Go on, now."

"My dear boy," Frank ejaculated, "I wish you success with all my heart."

And before Tom could say a word more, he was gone.

CHAPTER IV.

Mrs. Kingsbury had placed some one at the piano, and her summer boarders were enjoying themselves hugely. But Tom Waldron felt that he wished to think, so he strolled out on the piazza that extended nearly around the house. The eastern horizon was just a little tinged with yellow light, which told that the moon, not yet up, would shortly appear. Yes, Tom had food for thought. It had been several hours since he had said that he intended to propose to Gyp, but he had not yet done so, though he could, no doubt, at almost any moment, obtain an interview with her. But looking the matter in the face, he felt his courage failing him. Could she love him? He hoped much, and feared much. She had refused Frank—was she not as likely to refuse him? His heart sank as he thought of the probability of her doing so. In that case his wound would not be so easily healed as Frank's.

He seated himself behind some clustering vines and continued to think. Presently a couple promenaded along the piazza past him, a lady and gentleman, as he distinguished.

"So you love me, sweet?" he heard Frank Edwards say.

"With all my heart," a voice responded. It was the tender voice of Ella Parsons.

Then Tom heard a very audible concession from two pairs of lips.

"O Frank, I thought you didn't love me," Ella continued.

"I have all this time," murmured that young gentleman.

Tom scarcely knew what to do. He didn't care particularly to overhear this little tender passage. But he had done so, and he concluded that it was now too late to make himself known. There was more said in the same strain, and then the pair went back into the house, evidently delighted with themselves and all the world besides.

"So that affair is settled satisfactorily," Tom thought. Then he went back to his meditations. They were destined to be interrupted again, for very shortly after a light tread came along the piazza. A single person this time, a lady too. She came on till she was within a few feet of Tom. Then she seated herself. The moon was just rising, broad and full. Her mellow rays fell upon the face of the lady. It was Gyp Kingsbury. A sudden courage filled Tom Waldron's breast. He would test his fate now. He rose and advanced to her side.

"Miss Kingsbury," he said.

"Mr. Waldron," she returned.

What could he do but proceed to his purpose. He took her hand. "I love you," he said abruptly.

She rose and stood before him. He felt her hand tremble in his grasp. "I love you with all the strength of my nature," he repeated passionately.

Gyp did a very natural and a very womanly thing. She burst into tears. It was a sure augury that she loved him.

"But I am so—so—"

"What, dearest?"

"So giddy and wild," she murmured.

"You are just as I would have you, my own," Tom answered.

Somehow or other her head fell on his shoulder. "Do you love me? Can you?" he asked.

"I do love you," she whispered.

Just at that moment a cloud obscured the moon, and—pshaw! of course he kissed her.

* * * * * *

For fear that you, dear reader, may have some doubts, I will add that Frank Edwards and his pretty little wife, she who was formerly Ella Parsons, are as happy as there is any necessity for. Of course, Mr. Tom and Mrs. Gyp Waldron are.

WON, AND LOST.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

"Miss Genevieve Berrian."

Ross Graham wrote the name on the cover of a little white box, then drew out a sheet of paper and wrote these lines:

"*Miss Berrian:*—I have long desired to tell you what you must have seen—that I love you. I have never had an opportunity to do so, and a dread of offering love where it may be undesired, makes me almost a coward. I enclose in the box which accompanies this an opal star. If I see it in your hair to-night, may I take it as a sign that my love is not rejected, and that I *may speak?*

"R. G."

Then he took from a drawer a little case of purple velvet. Upon a bed of snow lay a star of opals. The jewel caught the sunlight, and gathered it all together in its fiery heart, then flashed it out in a thousand rays of brightness. It seemed to hold the glory and glitter of the rainbow in its soul.

He put the case in the little white box, and looked about for his wax.

"I have lost it," he said. "I will get some from the library."

As his feet touched the hall below, a woman stole from the room opposite his and entered through the door he had left open. She went up to his desk and read the letter he had written.

"Ah!" she said. "He takes this method of telling her how much he loves her. I *will not* give him up so easily. Genevieve Berrian it lies between you and me, and *you shall not* win!"

She stole out again. There was an evil glitter in her eyes. Had you seen her face you would have said she was plotting mischief.

Ross Graham came back presently. He sealed the box, then folded the note and enclosed it in an envelope bearing the same address. Placing them together in a drawer, he closed the desk and left the room.

On the landing he met his cousin Isabel.

"Ah—going out?" he asked.

"Yes," she answered, turning her dark and beautiful face toward him. Her eyes were soft now, and full of fascinating influences.

"You are a beautiful woman," he said, as he bent and kissed her olive cheek. "One of the most beautiful women I ever saw."

She smiled bewitchingly at the compliment.

"I suppose you think the *most* beautiful woman you ever saw is a certain Genie Berrian," she said, laughingly. "Rumor says so. Is rumor right?"

"Of course," he answered, smiling.

"Perhaps I shall see her on the street. If so, I'll tell her what you said." She ran down the stairs, sending back a soft, musical laugh as she reached the hall.

In one of the stores she met Miss Berrian.

"Good-morning," she said, holding out her hand to the woman who had won Ross Graham's heart. "Have you seen Robert Greville this morning?"

Miss Berrian had not.

"Ah?" said Miss Leith. "Then perhaps I can let you into a little secret. I saw him at Tiffany's. He was looking at an opal star. From a remark he dropped, I am sure I know what he intends to do with it. If you find out anything about it, let me know."

"You shall know all I learn about it," answered Miss Berrian, wondering what had put the idea into Miss Leith's head that she would be apt to know any more about Mr. Greville's jewels than any one else. Mr. Greville was hardly the sort of man for a woman of Genevieve Berrian's taste to be intimate with. Did Miss Leith mean to intimate that the jewel was intended for her?

"Remember," cried Miss Leith, "you promised to tell me if you find out anything more about the opal."

That afternoon a box and a letter bearing her name in the same handwriting were laid upon her table. She opened the letter and read what Ross Graham had written that morning.

"R. G." She repeated the initials over. "Robert Greville. Miss Leith must have known more about the jewel than she cared to tell me this morning. Mr. Greville is presumptuous."

A flush crossed her face. She dropped the note into the fire, then wrote Robert Greville's name upon a piece of paper and wrapped the box in it. Calling a servant, she bade him take the box to the address it bore.

"I could never love Greville," she said to herself; "but," with a softened tone and a tenderer light in her eyes, "I *could* love Ross Graham." The confession of this sweet secret, even to herself, sent swift flashes of color over her beautiful face, and made her very womanly.

That night Ross Graham stood in the crowded parlors of a friend's residence, and listened to the delicious waltz-music, rising and falling in long, slow waves of sound.

Miss Leith was not far away. A dark dress, with crimson trimmings, made her olive beauty dazzlingly brilliant. A scarlet camelia in her hair, and one upon her bosom among folds of filmy lace, set off her features as no gems could have done. Her eyes were bright enough to make up her lack of jewels.

There was a bustle at the door. It was Genevieve Berrian came in as Ross looked that way. Robes of some pure white material drifted about her form. Pearls caught up her hair and held it back from her beautiful face. They sparkled on her bosom like distilled moonlight. No opal shone like condensed fire in her fair hair.

Ross Graham turned away with a sudden sinking of his heart. Had he been deceived? Had tender words and downcast glances meant nothing?

Sick of the glare and glitter, full of mockery to his feelings just then, he left the parlor and entered the gentlemen's dressing-room. Two or three gentlemen were there. One of them was standing under the chandelier. Something glittered on his watch-guard. Ross Graham caught the glimmer, and saw—an opal star!

At that moment the lurid fire which leaped from the stone with every movement of its wearer, caught the attention of a young man standing by.

"Ah, Greville," he asked, "what have you there? A rather costly trinket to wear in your fob, I should say; you are getting extravagant."

"Rather pretty, isn't it?" said Greville, holding it in the light. "Portable lightning," flashing it back and forth in the blaze of gaslight. "The mystery of the thing makes it all the more valuable to me. You see I received it from some unknown source, this afternoon—and I haven't the least idea who sent it."

Ross Graham staggered out into the open air. There was no hope now. She was false to him. He had thought her the incarnation of all that is pure and womanly in woman; and he had loved her! That was worst of all.

Isabel Leith saw, without appearing to see. She read the secret of the pallor on her cousin's face. She knew what no one else in the room knew, except himself, that his heart was aching with a terrible pain. And she knew what he did not—that she had caused it. But she was playing to win, and the game was between her and Genevieve Berrian—and *she* would not give up while there remained the shadow of a chance. She was glad Genevieve Berrian had sent the jewel back to its supposed sender. Now Ross believed that she had a hidden fondness for Greville, and had sent the jewel to him. Believing this, he would not trouble himself long about her. It might cause him a pang, but it would soon be over.

"Isabel," Ross said, a little later, "I am going home. I will send the carriage for you when you are ready."

"Let me go with you," she said. "Indeed, I would rather."

"As you please," he answered.

The drive home was a silent one. He was too busy with his bitter thoughts to think of anything to say to her. She thinking of how much she had accomplished, could afford to be silent.

In the hall, he kissed her good-night as usual.

"Oh, Ross!" she cried, "if you only knew how unworthy Genevieve Berrian is of your love."

"I *do!*" he said, bitterly. "I do not believe there is such a thing as sincerity in the world."

"Don't think because *she* is false, *all* women are," she said, her voice full of syren sweetness.

"I don't know," he answered, doubtfully.

"*I* do," she whispered, her eyes upon his face, her breath upon his cheek. Then, as if suddenly remembering herself, she blushed hotly, and drew her hand away from his as if in sudden shyness. It was a pretty piece of acting.

"Would *you* be true?" he asked. "Could *you* love well enough to forego the pleasure of putting your foot upon the heart you had won?"

"Oh, Ross! how can you ask me?" she cried.

He asked himself a swift question. Should he show Genevieve Berrian how little he cared for her by taking this woman for his wife. His pride was touched, as well as his heart, you see.

"Isabel," he said suddenly, "could you love me well enough to marry me?"

"Don't ask me such questions," she answered. "No matter how much I could love you, you could not care for me."

"I am in earnest," he said, seriously. "If you will take me, tell me so."

"Oh, Ross! do you mean it?" she cried, and put up her ripe, red lips and kissed him, her face full of triumphant gladness.

That was their betrothal.

When Miss Berrian heard of it, her face grew ghastly white for a moment, only one. Then she summoned up all her pride, and crushed down the pain that was beating at her heart, that no one might see it in her face.

"False! false!" she kept saying to herself. "And I loved him so!"

Five years went by. They were not happy years to Ross. He found out, when too late, that he and Isabel Leith had no tastes in common. He had a sweet, vague dream in his heart of home, and loving faces by its hearth: she cared only for the bustle and excitement of the world—the gilded folly of fashionable life.

At the end of the fifth year of their marriage they were in Italy.

The day before they were to start for home, he tired of the monotony of the streets of Florence, and struck off into the country, where he could be alone and rest. The kind of life they had been leading tired him.

He climbed a sunny hill where grapes turned their swart cheeks to the sun. Before him lay the city whose beauty had haunted many a poet's memory. Beyond it stretched the sun-kissed waters reflecting a perfect sky.

A step stirred the grass beside him, and looking round, he saw, for the first time almost since his marriage, the face of Genevieve Berrian.

Both grew pale when they looked into each other's face. Some bitter memories stirred in their hearts, and showed themselves upon their faces.

"Excuse me," she said, unsteadily. "I was not aware I was intruding."

"Not at all," he answered. "Take this seat. You look tired."

She sat down wearily.

"Have you heard from America lately?" he asked.

"By the last post," she answered. "Your brother's widow is married to Robert Greville."

"Ah!" he started as if struck. "I supposed, at the time I came away, that Mr. Greville had other intentions than of waiting marriage so long." He looked at her meaningly.

"If you supposed Mr. Greville was any thing to me, you were mistaken," she answered, understanding what he meant. "I never liked him."

He started. Was she speaking truthfully? If she had not cared for the man, why had she given him the opal? Should he ask her?

"Mr. Greville had an opal star, which he supposed to be from some unknown admirer. *Knowing who sent him the opal*, and knowing that Greville had a fancy at the time for its sender, I naturally supposed that the affair would culminate in marriage."

"I do not understand you," she said; "Mr. Greville sent me an opal star, which I returned to him. That is all I know about it."

"Genevieve, Miss Berrian"—his tone was full of intense eagerness. "Did a note accompany the box, asking you to wear the star, if you were not indifferent to the giver? Tell me, please?"

"Yes," she answered.

"And you thought Robert Greville sent it?"

"His initials were signed," answered Miss Berrian. "Isabel, your wife, told me that she saw Mr. Greville selecting such a jewel that morning, and hinted, at the time she told me this, that I might know something more about it before long. When it came, I supposed, of course, that it came from Robert Greville. The note accompanying it, I burned. The box I sent to Robert Greville, supposing I was returning it to its sender."

"*I* sent it to you!" Ross Graham answered, slowly. "You did not wear the jewel, and I saw it on Greville's watch-guard, and heard him say that some one—he did not know who—had sent it to him. From that I supposed you had been trifling with me, and that, in sending the jewel to him, you made it serve two purposes—to show me that I was dismissed, and to encourage him, if he found out who sent it, to continue his attentions."

"Are you *sure?*" she asked. "Isabel told me that she saw Greville purchase it. She knew, she must have known!"

"I see it all," he said, like one in a dream. "I was blind! blind! To serve her own purposes she told you what she did. She deceived us both. God forgive her, but she played a wicked part."

"Life is full of mistakes," Genevieve said, her eyes on the far blue hills.

"It is hard to look the truth in the face, but I can do it, knowing that, after all, you were the true, pure woman I had thought you to be. I believe the hardest blow of all was to think that you were false, and that my dream of true womanhood was after all *only* a dream. How can I go back to my wife knowing what I do now, and live my life out with her? Pity me! Pity me! But I shall hate her."

The woman's eyes were full of tears. From her heart she *did* pity the strong man so shaken with sudden grief.

"Be brave," she said. "After the cross-bearing, cometh rest. We all have crosses to bear. Some have heavier ones than others, but I think those who bear the heaviest burdens will have the sweetest rest when rest comes."

"I will be brave—*for your sake*, for the sake of *what might have been!*" he said. "I must go. Good-bye. God have you in his keeping!"

He held her hand in his a moment, then went down the hill toward the city lying in a haze of golden splendor beneath a cloudless sky.

"What is the matter with you?" Isabel asked, as they sat together that evening in the mellow moonlight which flooded the scene with silver radiance. "You have hardly spoken since you came back."

"I have been thinking," he answered. "I saw Genevieve Berrian to-day. I have solved the secret of the opal. Do you comprehend?"

A gasping cry came to the woman's lips. How he must hate her! And she had done it because she loved him. In spite of all her faults and follies, she loved him still.

"Never mention it to me," he said. "What has been done cannot be undone, and is better left to silence and the past. Your own conscience must condemn you, and no words of reproach are needed from me. Between us this subject need never be spoken of again. Let life go on as best it can. It doesn't matter much how. It will be a dreary thing at the best."

He never mentioned it to her after that. But she knew he had not forgotten. She could tell that by his face.

Years have gone by and these three lives go on, but each holds its regrets and its remorseful memories. Life is not what it ought to be to them. Ross Graham and Genevieve Berrian think of what *was and what might have been*, and sigh for something which perhaps will never come to them until they meet in other lands than these. Isabel thinks of what she played to win, and knows that she won and *lost!*

MARY WINTER'S HISTORY.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

BY MRS. HENRY WOOD,

AUTHOR OF "EAST LYNNE."

I.

I shall never forget the day so long as my life lasts. It rests upon my mind as the sweetest I ever spent in this world. In spite of what succeeded to it—the keen first anguish, and then the months and months of dull, wearing pain—the bliss of that one day reflects itself a little in my heart even now; causing me, when at rare intervals some incident recalls it, to feel a faint glow of what once was, like the shadow of a fading rainbow.

It was a hot morning of a gorgeous summer. One of those days, when the sky is almost a purple blue, and the sun rides his triumphant course in the heavens, unchecked by a cloud; when we abandon work and all kinds of exertion, and lie on the grass under sheltering trees, or in dells by the side of the cool, murmuring rivulet. Just as you may see, in the picture I draw, a young lady seated on a rustic bench placed under a spreading oak tree that made one of a grove of trees behind her, clustering together their thick and graceful foliage. The grass in front sloped down to the bank and hedge that bounded it. The hedge was gay with its clusters of wild roses and woodbine, flinging out their fragrance on the air; all along the bank nestled blue-bells, flowering thyme, forget-me-nots, and the small pink blossoms that are so pretty and that served to make a contrast in coloring. Beyond the hedge lay the beanfield in flower, its delicious scent overpowering that of the woodbine. And, farther off, was stretched out a wide expanse of landscape; woods and dales and trees and hills, all in one vast panorama of beauty. Farm-houses were scattered about; gleams of bubbling water might be seen; the cattle browzed lazily; the golden corn was ripening. The young lady had brought out a book; but it lay unopened beside her. A large straw hat came over her face, shading its delicate complexion from the sun. It was a bright and pleasant face, with golden brown hair, and a somewhat pensive look in the dark brown eyes. She was of middle height, graceful in figure as are most young girls; and she wore a light summer muslin, with frilled pelerine of the same, in fashion then, whose long ends were crossed on her chest. That young lady was I.

It was I, Mary Serena Winter. I sat there in a dream of silent happiness. The book was a charming book, read by me then for the first time, "The Bride of Lammermoor;" but it was not as charming as the thoughts I was lost in: and so I let it lie and thought them out. *One* would be with me that evening who was more to me than all the world—Francis Gayne.

Our parish and village—the village lying beyond the grove of trees behind me—was called St. Leet's. Two miles away lay another parish and village: that of Naughton. The Rector of Naughton, incapacitated by grave illness, was an allowed absentee: in his place was appointed, as permanent curate, the Reverend Francis Gayne. He had been there a year now; living in the rectory with his sister: and we, he and I, had learned to be all the world to each other.

"This is Thursday," I said to myself, "and on Thursday evenings he always comes"—and oh! the spring of joy that thrilled through my whole soul at the thought! Looking up at the sun, I saw it must be

about twelve o'clock. In six hours I should see him.

He had called me many endearing names, he had told me how he loved me: but about marriage he had never spoken much. Where was the use, he said, one day, of planning and plotting, so long as he had but his hundred pounds a year stipend, and the rectory to live in? Very true. I had my own little fortune—a hundred and ten pounds a year, all told: but my mother—as he and I believed—would not have allowed me to marry on so slender a prospect. We did not cast a thought to it: not a regret. At least, I can answer for myself. So long as we were together, and could see each other every few days, that was bliss enough without looking to the future.

The morning was lovely! with the serene blue heavens above, the still repose of all things around, the sweet scent of the beanfield, that came wafting gently on in one delicious odor! It was very warm, though. Taking off my hat, I laid it on the grass. I knew I ought to get on with my book; it had been lent to me by Emily Merrit, and I should have to give it back on the morrow; but there I sat, instead, idly looking and dreaming. A sudden movement aroused me.

Pushing through a gap in the hedge, from that fragrant beanfield, and swiftly leaping up the slight hill before me, came one, without warning. Ere my brain had well given its startled thrill, he was upon me; ere my cheeks had gained their hue of deeper crimson, his hand was on mine. It was Francis Gayne.

"Have I surprised you, Mary?"

Surprised me! My face was changing, my very heart's blood was bounding and dancing. How should I hide from him the rush of joy that thrilled through all my frame? That one moment rests on my memory yet as no other has ever rested, or ever will rest. The day had been bright before: it was heaven now.

"Where did you come from, Francis?"

"Not out of the beans," he answered, laughing. "I had business with Mr. Lambert this morning, Mary, and so came over to the parsonage. When it was at an end, I took the beanfield path, and saw you sitting here."

He was tall and slender and very good-looking. Fair, with light curling hair, and expressive blue eyes. Dressed in his superfine best, as he was to-day, he looked a man in a thousand; a man fit to stand amidst courtiers before the Queen. My heart went up with a great throb of pride as I shyly gazed at him.

"Make a bit of room, my darling."

My face and neck must have been all one blush as I obeyed, for the seat was hardly wide enough for more than me. I went to the extreme edge. There was nobody about, or likely to be, and he stole his arm round my waist and held me.

"What should you say, Mary, if I were going to get a rise?"

"A rise?"

"A change from the curacy of Naughton to a living of my own."

"But I thought you were permanent curate at Naughton, Francis."

"Permanent, in so far as that I am not likely to be removed while my rector lives," he answered. "But not permanently absolutely. If a living were offered me I am at liberty to take it."

"And to quit Naughton?"

"Of course."

"Has a living been offered you?"

"Not quite yet. I think it is about to be. I got a note last night from Mr. Lambert, asking me to come over to the St. Leet's vicarage this morning for the purpose of meeting a gentlemen to whom he wished to introduce me. I did so: and found the gentleman was Sir John Amos. He has a vacant living in his gift; and Mr. Lambert had been speaking a word for me to him."

"And shall you have it?" I eagerly said.

Francis Gayne smiled. "You are dating onwards, my dear, in asking that. I cannot tell. Sir John was very polite, but he gave no sign one way or the other."

Still, the possibility was hope enough for us. Francis took off his hat and laid it on the grass by his side, just as I had laid mine, and wiped from his brow the moisture gathered there. Then we sat on together, our hearts at rest; talking a little of what should be if the living came to him, but mostly keeping silence. Oh! what a happy hour it was! all the happier to me for having been unexpected. It was so rarely that we met in the morning. Even to this day, the passing of a beanfield when the perfume's on it, will bring something of the old feelings to my memory.

Looking at his silver watch by-and-by, he found it was one o'clock. How quickly the time had passed! We went back through the grove and the shady path: and Francis—Francis under the dark shadow of the trees, when no eye was on us—caught my face to his and kissed it lingeringly. Beyond the grove, at this end of the village, stood our house, a large, old-fashioned red bricked dwelling. My brother Richard was coming along at his usual striding pace.

"Why, Gayne!" he exclaimed, "are you here this morning!" And Francis explained why he had come, as they shook hands.

I have often wondered since whether Richard suspected what there was between us—and I can never answer. He was much absorbed by his own courting, for he was going to be married, and by the management of his land. But I think my mother saw a little how it was. Nothing had been said to her by either me or Francis. He felt ashamed to ask for me until his prospects should brighten. If he got this new living——Ah, if he only got it!

"It is dinner-time," said Richard to him. "Will you come in and take some?"

My mother met us at the door. In her old-fashioned, simple courtesy she said she should be very much pleased if Mr. Gayne would partake of dinner, but it was only a plain one: cold roast beef, and a currant and raspberry pudding. I don't believe Francis knew whether it was cold or hot: I don't believe we, he or I, knew anything but that we sat at the same table, facing each other.

He went out with Richard afterwards. I read my Bride of Lammermoor in sweet content: my mother fell asleep over her patchwork. They came back to tea. The table was laid in the garden under the spreading elm tree; and quite a little feast was made of it. All for him, my mother told him in a laughing way. In the cool of the evening, when he set off to walk to Naughton, we went part of the way with him, quitting him when he left the fields for the highway.

Francis did not get the living. Mr. Lambert—you will have understood that he was our vicar at St. Leet's—informed him that Sir John Amos had been much pleased with what he saw of him, but he thought him too young to have charge of a parish that teemed with poor, some of whom were rough. Francis was six-and-twenty: and, as he said to me, every day would make him older, and he should rather have liked to tackle the roughs and the poor. However—it was not to be.

It was somewhat of a disappointment perhaps: especially to him: but so long as we were within reach of each other and could meet, nothing touched us much. The summer passed into autumn, and the autumn began to give place to winter: and to me the whole earth was nothing less than Eden.

It was a busy autumn with us. At its close Richard married and brought home his wife, and I and my mother went to another home—a pretty little house hard by. When my father had died some people thought he had not been fairly just to my brothers; that he should have left what he had to leave more equally. Richard, because he was the eldest, had the house and the land. The two younger, Tom in Canada, George in London, had but a sum of five hundred pounds each left to them; no more. My mother had an annuity during her life, chargeable on Richard and the estate: at her death it would go back to Richard. My sister, who had married very well indeed, had nothing. And I—I had money that brought me in a hundred and ten pounds yearly; of which money my three brothers were co-trustees; and a home with my mother so long as she should live and I was single.

And so, I say, the summer and autumn passed; and in my heart I think the time was only marked by the meetings with Francis Gayne. There where moments when we paced together in the sunlight; interviews, brief and stolen, when our hands met under the faint light of the moon. Hope shed around us her golden coloring; and all was peace.

II.

The last week in November a letter came from my brother George in London. Clara (his wife) was ill; confined to her room with her little two weeks' old baby; the household was taking advantage of her incapacity to run riot; and George wanted my mother—an active manager yet—to go up for a short while and to see things. His practice was a very fair one, he said, for a beginner, but it would not stand seven pounds of fresh butter in a week, and a gallon of ale daily.

"Shall you go, mamma?" I asked, after she had read the letter aloud.

"Of course I shall, Mary. And you, also."

"I?"

"Why, yes. George knows I go nowhere now without you. And they will be very glad to see you."

"Well—of course—if you wish—"

"Have you any objection to go?" came the quick interruption to my hesitating words.

How could I say I had? The thought of Francis Gayne, of leaving him, had made me turn for a moment half faint and sick. The next, I felt ashamed of my selfishness, and answered impulsively.

"Of course I will go with you, mamma."

"And I think, my dear, that we can manage to get off this afternoon. There's a train passes at five o'clock, or thereabouts, and we shall be in London and at George's between eight and nine. I cannot let him be eaten out of house and home."

How I hoped that Francis would chance to come over that morning! I did not like to write to tell him we were going away. At least, I should not have minded writing; but how could I bring myself to the boldness of giving the note to any messenger to take? The hope was vain, and he did not come.

Richard went with us to the station; telling us all the way in a laughing kind of grumble, that we should be a month too early, and might take a good nap in the waiting room. My mother answered that it was better to be too early than too late, and he had no need to wait to see us off.

Richard was right. We had twenty minutes to spare. He went to hold a gossip with the station master; and my mother insisted upon keeping guard over our luggage at the end of the platform, in spite of my telling her (and the porter, too,) that it would be safe.

"Then, mamma, I will look to it. You go in to the fire and sit down."

"Don't you take your eyes off it for a minute, Mary; especially the basket. I know what these stations are: and at the dusk hour."

She went indoors; and I, honorably true to my bargain, sat down on the bench under the window; and stared at the trunks and the basket: the latter containing fowls, and game, and a home-cured ham, we were conveying to George. The station was nearly deserted; the lights burned drearily. I sat on, a model of patience.

A bell tinkled, and a train came rushing in, and stopped at the opposite platform. Some passengers alighted, and crossed over the bridge to this side; for at that period there was no other egress, but it has been altered since. All gave up their tickets and disappeared except one; a well-dressed young lady, who stood looking about her.

"This way, ma'am, this way," cried the ticket-collector. "Ticket, please."

She turned round at the authoritative words, which brought her face nearly close to mine. I had stood up, thinking I heard the other train.

"I am waiting for my luggage," said the young lady, in a haughty voice. She had a haughty face too, but a fair one, with beautiful light hair that gleamed in the gaslight.

"What's that there about luggage?" asked Cobb, the porter, who considered it his duty to be surly with strangers, and who had followed the passengers across. "There ain't no luggage come by this train, save the bags the folk carried theirselves."

"There's my luggage," coldly repeated the young lady.

It turned out that the luggage had gone on in the train. A few words of recrimination ensued; she charging the porter with not looking after it; he charging her with not telling him there was any to look after.

"This comes of my travelling alone—they told me I should lose myself," I heard her murmur, as she drew up her tall form to its full height.

"We must send a message after it; it'll come back all right," said Cobb. "What's the name on't—and where's it to be took to?"

"My name—Miss Bartholomew," she said. "It must be sent to Captain Lambert's. Are none of the Lamberts here to meet me? They ought to be."

"There's a power o' folk outside," said the man. "Since the accident last week the station-master won't let nobody on to this here platform when a train's starting, except them what's going by it."

She drew her travelling shawl round her, gave up her ticket, and passed through the door without another word. Captain Lambert and his family lived at Naughton; I knew them slightly, but not much. The captain and our vicar were cousins. Richard came flying from the little office.

"Mary, where's the mother? The train is nearly up."

We got off safely, ourselves and our baggage; Richard vowing he had given special directions as to the safety of the basket. My last recollection, in steaming out of the station, was of a fair, proud, self-possessed girl, with waving bright hair, and who bore what had struck me as being a singular name—Bartholomew.

III.

It was a green Christmas. A warm season, almost like spring. Birds sang; violets peeped up in the home garden. As I went along the lane leading to the church, the balmy mildness of the air and the stillness of the skies were gratefully pleasant. I could almost fancy I saw the hedges springing out into bud.

How glad I was to be at home again! My whole pulses were thrilling with happiness. I might see him at any minute; see *him*. More than three weeks, nearly a month, and we had neither met nor heard from each other.

We had come home the previous night, after staying all that while in London. It had seemed to me something like a year. This was Christmas Eve, and there was a great deal to do—what with unpacking, and answering letters, and preparing for the morrow, when Richard and his wife would dine with us. Richard had wanted us to go to them, but my mother said no; so long as she was able to entertain, her children must come to her on Christmas Day. The afternoon was waning before I had finished, and could run up to Richard's. His wife was not to be found in any of the sitting-rooms.

"My mistress is at the church, Miss Mary," said one of the servants, coming forth. "She's gone to help with the green things."

"What—is the church not done yet, Sarah?" I returned, in some surprise. For Mrs. Lambert never left it so late as Christmas Eve.

But Sarah could not say. She had heard her mistress at dinner say she was going to the church.

So I determined to go too. One of my regrets, but only a slight one, at having stayed so long in London, was the not being able to help with the church decorations. All girls like doing it. The old gray edifice stood sideways to me as I reached the end of the lane and went through the gate into the churchyard. Its windows had a red coloring in them. It was not the setting sun that cast it; it must be light from the inside.

Even so. Though still nearly broad daylight outside, the inside, never very bright, had grown dim, and the lamps were lighted. Quite a crowd of people seemed to be gathered in the open space before the chancel, and mounds of green branches strewed the flags. I heard talking and laughing. Mrs. Richard Winter saw me enter and came up the aisle.

"Is it you, Mary? I thought you were too busy to come out to-day; or I might have called for you."

"How are you getting on?"

"Oh, pretty well. We shall have to come back after tea and finish."

"Mrs. Lambert must have begun late this year, Agnes."

"She did. It was not her fault. Her daughters and most of the rest of the girls chose to go over to Naughton and get that one done first."

"What—Mr. Gayne's?" said I impulsively.

"Mr. Gayne's of course. There is no other church."

What for, I wondered. Our people had never gone to do this church before. Naughton had workers of its own.

"Have you taken my string, Mrs. Winter?"

We were nearly up with them, then. The young lady, who had turned round to put the question from the midst of a mountain of prickly holly, seemed to be familiar to me, both in her face and voice. A handsome girl with a haughty countenance. Where had I seen her? Tax my recollection as I would, I could not at that first moment tell.

"Carry Lambert has the string," replied Richard's wife.

"Wait an instant, Agnes," I whispered. "Who is that young lady?"

"Charlotte Bartholomew. She is staying at the vicarage; a relative of the Lamberts. Miss Bartholomew the heiress, some people call her. She is very rich."

"I remember now. I saw her ——"

The words died on my lips; the remembrance from my mind. Lifting itself up on the other side the holly, as if he had been stooping, appeared a face I knew and loved too well. Francis Gayne's. It all flashed upon me; they had been over to help him, and he in turn had come to help them. But Francis was speaking.

"Please toss the string here, somebody. We are at a standstill."

"Carry, what have you done with the string? I'm sure you had it. Oh, here's Mary Winter! Here's Mary Winter."

I saw his head go up with a kind of jerk. Our eyes met, thrilling my heart with happiness. But he did not come round; the holly was between us.

"Thank you," he said, as the twine was passed to him. And he bent his head down on the work again; that of making a wreath, which Miss Bartholomew held.

We were introduced to each other, she and I. In the hour's gossip that ensued while our hands were busy, I learnt many things. Miss Bartholomew had recovered her luggage promptly; she had stayed nearly three weeks at Captain Lambert's of Naughton, and had now come to stay as long at St. Leet's vicarage. And I learnt, moreover, that Richard and his wife were going to give a dance a day or two after Christmas. They were all full of it.

"You must come and help me dress the hall-room with evergreens," said Agnes, to them. "I should like it to look nice."

"Oh, won't we!" cried a chorus of voices in answer. "That *will* be fun."

"Let me see," went on Agnes. "To-morrow, Wednesday, is Christmas Day; and the dance will be Friday. That leaves only Thursday. We must do it then. You will all come."

"To be sure we will."

"Will you, Mr. Gayne?"

"I fear not," he answered. "The day after Christmas is a busy day in my parish. I will if I can, Mrs. Winter."

At five o'clock we dispersed for tea, leaving everything in the church as it was, and the sexton to take care of it. I had been longing for the hour to strike, that I and Francis might be once more together. I *knew* he would take me home. Most of them were going in to the vicarage; one or two home with Agnes. Amidst the crowd in the porch, he and I were close together.

"You will come home and see mamma?" I whispered to him. "And take tea."

"Thank you, Mary—if I could. But I have promised Mrs. Lambert."

Those who have experienced the same shock of disappointment will remember how their hearts fell. I had to make the best of it. He had promised her, reason told me, before he knew I should be at the church: perhaps before he even knew we had come home. They all turned one way; I and Agnes and the Miss Merrits another; and my steps were as lead. But still—oh it is true!—no shadow of what was to come lay on my spirit.

"How foolish I am!" I thought, taking myself to task. "In half an hour we shall be together in the church again; and he is sure to walk home with me later."

But—when we had re-assembled in the church, Francis was not there. Somebody asked where Mr. Gayne was, and Emma Lambert answered that he had pleaded business and gone hurrying home.

My mother did not altogether approve of the projected party, and as good as told Richard and Agnes so, while we sat at dessert on Christmas Day. They were getting fond of parties, she feared—and where would the younger children's portion have been had she and our father lived up to all their income, as she feared Richard must be doing? Richard laughed good-naturedly; he thought it would be time enough to think of putting by for his children when the children came.

On Thursday the girls came to help decorate the ball-room; a long room at the side of the house, with a white boarded floor and white washed walls, that had been our nursery when we were children. Everybody agreed it would have looked bare and naked without the evergreens. The wax-light sconces were nailed up at equal distances all round, and Richard hung some engravings between them. The rest was filled up with evergreens, chiefly holly; the lights and the pictures looked to be shining out of frames of green. They worked well. Miss Bartholomew had not come. And she was just as well away, said Emma Lambert, for she never gave real aid in any kind of work. Neither did I aid them. I was in the kitchen, helping the servants with the creams and jellies and trifles, for I was a better hand at that than Agnes.

You will not care to hear about the dance—only my share in it. My share! Just as the first day I wrote of rests on my memory as the whitest and sweetest of my life, so this night rests, and ever will rest, as the darkest.

We were both dressed alike—I and Charlotte Bartholomew. It chanced to be so. White muslins, white ribbons, and white pearls in our pretty hair. Oh yes! my hair, though of a different shade, was pretty as hers; I may say it surely now, when all my vanity has worn away.

Francis was late. His sister had come with the Lamberts, and was to sleep at the vicarage. It must have been quite eight o'clock; we are early in the country, remember, and some dances were over, when I saw him standing in the doorway talking to Mr. Lambert. He caught my eye and came forward. It was the first time I had seen him in strict evening dress, such as laymen wear.

"Good evening, Mary. Are you quite well?"

"You are late," I whispered, as my hand lingered in his.

"Yes. I could not get away before. It is our old women's tea party, and I——"

"Mary! My dear, I want you."

The call came from my mother, and I had to go to her.

"May I have the pleasure of dancing this next quadrille with you, Miss Winter?"

It was John Morrit who asked this; a steady young man, good as gold, the eldest son of our nearest neighbors. He had come up as I was turning from my mother.

"Not this next, John, thank you. Another set later if you like. For I as much believed I was engaged for this to Mr. Gayne as though he had formally asked me. Who else, but me, would Francis be likely to take for it? So John Merrit went up to Caroline Lambert.

The set was forming then, and I looked round for Francis. Several gentlemen stood in the doorway, non-dancers, but I could not see him with them. The music had begun. Why! there he was, standing at the head of the room, and making ready to lead off the quadrille, with Miss Bartholomew. What did it mean? Did he suppose I was engaged? But he had not come to ask me the question.

"Are you not dancing, Mary?" cried Richard's wife in surprise, as she passed me with her partner.

"Not this set, Agnes. John Merrit did ask me, but I declined."

I cannot say I was uneasy. I only thought there must have been some mistake somehow. The next set Francis came to me, and we stood up. It was the lancers. But he was very silent throughout, and I wondered what was amiss with him.

"Are you well, Francis?"

"Yes, thank you. Except for a bit of a headache. I shall not dance again, I think."

But he did. He seemed so cold and out of sorts, keeping aloof in the doorway, that half the pleasure of the evening went out for me. I had had my set with John Merrit, and sat out the next by my own choice. As to the waltzes—well, my dear mother did not care that I should join in them. I transgressed sometimes, as she knew, but never when she was present. It was the lancers, again: and—there was Francis Gayne standing up with Miss Bartholomew. He seemed animated enough now, and bent his head while he talked to her.

There was a large recess at one end of the room, where our rocking-horse used to stand. Richard and Agnes had improvised this into a temporary conservatory for the night. Its window opened on the garden-path; it had been left free in case air should be wanted. I stood with my face pressed on the panes, looking out on the moonlight. Behind me, the tall shrubs and plants intervening, two people were talking: and I knew the voices for those of Emma Lambert and Richard's wife.

"Yes, they are dancing together; I quite believe it is going to be a match," Emma was saying—and I remember wondering in a listless kind of way of whom they were speaking. "He dances well. Papa thinks it is scarcely the thing for Mr. Gayne, as a clergyman, to do, though he is a young man."

"Why, Emma, what harm can there be in his dancing at a sober gathering like this?" cried Mrs. Richard. "I dare say your papa did as much in his time."

Emma Lambert laughed: she was older than my brother's wife: and there ensued a pause. Emma resumed.

"I should not at all wonder but they are engaged. It will be a fine thing for Mr. Gayne if they do marry. Charlotte Bartholomew is rich. She has six hundred a year, and is her own mistress. Her father and mother are dead."

"They cannot have been long making matters up."

"He saw a great deal of her when he was at Captain Lambert's; since she came to us, not a day passes but he is over on some pretext or other. Between ourselves, I cannot help thinking that Mr. Gayne has been scheming for it. He is very close and selfish. I am sure of one thing—that Charlotte Bartholomew is in love with him: and she is what you may call beautiful."

"Well—yes," assented Mrs. Richard, dubiously. "A handsome and distinguished face, but not a soft one."

"If anything does come of it I shall be disappointed. At least, not I—for personally it is nothing to me—but my expectations will be. I fancied there was something between him and Mary."

"Mary Winter?"

"Yes. I suppose I must have been mistaken."

"That I am sure you were if you did think it," said Mrs. Richard decisively—and she spoke but in accordance with her opinion, for such an idea had never once entered her head.

"They have been so intimate. He was always coming over here or to Mrs. Winter's."

"Very intimate indeed. Intimate as brother and sister. Just one of those intimacies, Emma, that never result in anything warmer. As to his coming over often—I think that was for the friendship he bore my husband."

"Then *rely upon it*, it is a made-up thing with Charlotte Bartholomew," spoke Emma Lambert with emphasis. "She is not as pretty as Mary. Mary's face is one of the nicest I ever saw."

"As if men married for pretty faces!" returned Mrs. Richard—who had a plain one herself. "Mary is not rich either: Miss Bartholomew is."

The quadrille had ended; there was a great stir and bustle, and the speakers went away. Do you think I could have stayed in my prison, listening to what verily seemed to blister my brain, but for being hemmed in? Opening the glass doors softly I got out into the garden, ran round the house to a side door and so up to my old chamber. It was still called Miss Mary's room.

How I got through that next quarter of an hour, I know not. Down by the bed I knelt, my face buried in the clothes, my heart one living agony. I hardly thought I could bear it, and live. Trouble of many kinds might come to me in life; I knew not; but none like unto the anguish of that first awakening. Francis Gayne false! Francis Gayne false!

I might not stay. Almost worse than the agony itself, would be the shame to me of any one's suspecting it. Smoothing my hair, I went down again, instinctively seeking my mother's side, as if there were protection there. She was in the drawing-room by the fire, alone just then.

"You look pale, Mary. Cold. What is it, my dear?"

"Pale? cold?" I returned, sick at the remark, frightened at the question. "I shall be hot enough when I begin dancing again, mamma."

"Have you heard the news?" she resumed, in an undertone. "Mr. Gayne is going to be married."

"Oh, is he?"

The words were careless enough, but I knew that my poor face turned whiter than death. She looked at me with sad, solemn, questioning eyes.

"If it ever was as—as I had used to fancy, Mary, he is a false-hearted man, not worth a true girl's thought. My child, you may wish him a good journey in his new path: and wish it him with all your heart, as a worthless thing to be well rid of."

Oh, was there no peace for me anywhere? Anything but this; anything but this. My mother was going on to say that Agnes had whispered the news to her, when Agnes herself and ever so many more came in, their faces heated with the waltz just over. I turned away, snatched a shawl from the hall, and so went into the grounds through the open front door. Others were out also; it was a mild night and the air was welcome.

But I did not want to meet them. The shrubbery was dark and solitary, and I crept to the bench in the opening, and sat there. No, there was no peace even here; two people came pacing slowly down it: and—and—it was *they*. I could not get away until they had passed.

His arm was round her; his head was bent to a level with hers; he spoke in those low, sweet tones that had been hitherto kept for me only, and had made the music of my existence. I was thankful ever after, thankful in the solemn meaning of the word, that I was enabled to control myself to stillness.

"Never but you, Charlotte," he tenderly said: "I have never loved, or could love another. Why, my dearest, you must see this."

What she answered, I did not catch; the tone was lower than his; but she lifted her face to look at him. Francis Gayne bent his and kissed her lips: just as sweet a kiss as he was wont to leave on mine.

Do you not think I had enough of agony that night to serve me for a whole lifetime? I know this much: but for God's pitying help, I had never borne it.

The Reverend Francis Gayne was a coward, pitiful and paltry. That I should have to write it of him! Whether he was marrying Miss Bartholomew for her money or her beauty, he had deserted me in the most cruel and barefaced manner, and he owed me an explanation. Will it be believed that he never offered to give it? A gentleman would have striven to make some attempt at apology, though it were only to say "Mary, I am a rogue and vagabond, and I beg you to forgive and forget me." Not so he. He never spoke a private word to me after that: he never appeared to remember or to recognize that there had been anything between us. For appearance sake he came over now and then; but his sister was always with him. Richard, unsuspecting, laughing Richard, said how closely Gayne must be dancing attendance on his lady-love, Miss Bartholomew. During one of his visits, he and I were accidentally left alone together for five minutes. He nervously snatched up a book, went to the window, and kept reading it all the while, as though its contents enchained him. Did he fear, in his cowardice, that I should reproach him?—or tell him that my heart was broken?

Charlotte Bartholomew went back to her London home. In March she became Charlotte Gayne, and her husband brought her home to Naughton rectory.

III.

The years passed on. A heart-riving disappointment, such as this, cannot fall upon a woman and not leave its traces. They are felt for all time. Nothing in this world can ever be quite the same again. The one taste of paradise—the only glimpse that can be caught of it here—has faded out for aye; and we have to do the best we can with prosaic reality. Never more can the world's path be strewn with flowers: with flowers that made every step a strange, romantic, unutterable bliss. The skies have lost their fascinating hatre: the trees are but dull trees, after all; the garden's roses are only earthly ones.

I did the best. I strove and struggled with my bitter heart, and tried to find content—not pleasure: that could not be—in the ties still left to me. I think it was about two years before the battle was quite won. A long while, some reader will incredulously say; but I am telling the simple truth; and I believe few in this world loved as I loved. At the two years' end, I could think of the past without a shiver: I might even have talked of it, had there been any close friend to whom I could open my soul. The power to feel that sweet romance could never be renewed; "the song had left the bird;" but I was quite prepared to fulfill cheerfully all the duties that might fall to me in this life, and to take the good it gave me. I was ready to enter on woman's special mission and marry, did any eligible man, one whom I could respect and esteem, present himself.

Let none be shocked at the avowal. I believe that every woman born into the world, does possess in a greater or less degree the latent instinct to find a helpmate. I believe that where a woman goes through life unchosen, a sensation of disappointment, a sore consciousness of neglect arises up within her at odd moments, and is felt bitterly. Yes: I was ready to be chosen; secretly hoping for it; and no reason whatever existed why I should not be.

There was one man in the world I would not and could not have married now—allowing that he had been free—the Reverend Francis Gayne. How it may be with others, I know not: but in my case the process of cure had left me with a peculiar distaste to him. I do not well know how to describe the feeling. I did not dislike him as an acquaintance; I don't know that I should have refused him as a friend; but to marry him would have been simply impossible: I should have shrunk from the bare idea with an aversion and horror.

A suitor came in the shape of John Merrit. He told me, his fair, fresh manly face blushing ingenuously, that he had loved me always; but his father had made a point of his waiting for his twenty-fifth birth-day before he spoke, that he might "be sure he knew his own mind." I liked John Merrit; he was a young man worthy of being liked; one in a thousand; and the marriage in a pecuniary point of view was unexceptionable. I said Yes: and my mother and Richard shook his hand warmly. We had pleasant days together that spring and summer.

Our marriage was fixed for the month of October. We lingered together in the soft evenings, when the trees and hedges were still in their full-leafed bloom, conversing on our future life, and the happiness it would bring. There was perfect confidence between us. John told me of some frightful scrapes he got into at college in what he called his thoughtless and foolish days: how vexed and ashamed he felt when he recalled them! And I told him of my love for Francis Gayne.

I don't know whether it was wrong or right, expedient or non-expedient, wise or silly. I told him I had once loved the clergyman with my whole heart: but I did not enlarge upon that period, or what it had cost me; and I said the love had *more* than died out: I said moreover that I could never have regarded Mr. Gayne with the same steady and true esteem I felt for *him*. John only pressed my hand as we walked, and laughed a little at my "girlish fancy." Evidently the confession bore nothing serious to his mind.

But there lay a fatality on the projected union. In September, when we were in the full tide of preparation for it; I sowing, John crowding his new home with all kinds of costly and pretty things, lavishing far more money than was needful—in September my mother died. My dear mother, who had been the best that ever children had. Ailing all the summer, she died quietly and peacefully, in the sure and certain hope of the Resurrection through Christ.

"I will not have your marriage put off for me, Mary," she said once or twice in the last week. "I may not live to see you married; but it must not be put off."

Not for very long, as I decided afterwards. But neither John nor I liked to wed within a month—as it would have been. In December—we both agreed. The tenth of December, all being well. And that, a flash of memory told me, would be three years since Mr. Gayne's perfidy. I had been a child then; a child of twenty. I was twenty-three, and, in some things, an aged woman now.

My mother's cottage was given up, and I went home to Richard's. I had paid a long visit during those first miserable two years to George and his wife in London; and it served to wean my thoughts from old scenes. George was getting on well now and drove his brougham; they had always thought a good deal of his skill at Guy's.

December came in. On the third of the month, when the wind was southerly and the skies had as much grey as blue, Richard left the breakfast table to go about on his land as usual. His wife suddenly remembered something she ought to have told him. I ran out, and caught him at the gate.

"Oh, very well," replied Richard, "I'll see about it when I come home, tell Agnes. Mary, who's this?"

A gentlemen well mounted was riding down the road, in his scarlet coat and white small-clothes. My heart filled with pleasure as I recognised him; though it did not bound tumultuously, or my cheeks redden, as they once had done at the sight of another. Richard broke into a stave of our old nursery rhyme—

"This is Sir John Barleycorn
Who rode the horse with the beautiful form,
Which followed the huntsman with his hounds and horn."

John Merrit, riding leisurely up on his favorite hunter, stopped at the gate. The hounds were to meet about a mile away.

"It's fine to be you, going a hunting every other day of your lazy life!" cried Richard, half in earnest, half in jest.

"Why don't you go yourself?" asked John, laughing.

"I! Because I have more serious things to think of. You have all the play, Merrit, and I the work."

"Will you bring me the brush home, John?" I asked, as Richard went singing off.

"If I can, my darling."

He spoke quite seriously. "Why, John, I was only joking."

"I know you were," he answered, his good face lighting with a smile. "I must ride on, or there'll be no chance of it. God bless you, Mary."

I got to my sewing at once, and sat softly singing. Singing and thinking. Will it be believed that I went through the whole of the "House that Jack built," begun by Richard? I did; and more than once; an under current of thought in my mind all the while. On that day next week I was to leave with John for good.

By and by I saw Richard come swinging through the gate, and wondered what brought him home so early. Busy with my work, I did not look up again; but I heard him come into the hall, and then I heard a kind of prolonged whispering. Not being more free from curiosity than other people, I opened the parlor door to look.

Why—what was it? Richard and his wife were standing in the middle of the hall, and gazing at one another in a kind of dumb terror; their faces white as death.

"Richard, what's the matter?" I asked.

"What has happened?"

They both turned to me, Agnes clasping her hands with a gesture of despair. Richard—Richard came to me and led me very tenderly to the sofa whence I had risen. I knew then; knew as surely as though he had said it, something had happened to John.

I can bear to write it calmly now; calmly as I have written of the other shadows of my life. John Merrit was dead. Leaping a gate—which he had leaped safely on the same steed many and many a time before—his horse, from some unexplained cause, did not clear it. He fell down with a crash, rolling over and over, and his master's neck was broken.

Even as Richard was trying to tell me this a tramping of many feet went by the gate; a hurdle in their midst, on which lay something covered over closely. Poor Richard, hardly put to it in his perplexity, interposed himself between me and the light.

IV.

Years again went by, more than I have told of yet. Summer succeeded to winter; winter to summer. They brought their changes. The home changes I need not say much of. My brother in Canada lost all he had, and his children came home to be taken care of amongst us. Misfortunes of one kind or another happen to most families, and the burthen has to be borne.

I was in my twenty-sixth year when Francis Gayne's wife died. She left him with four little girls, the youngest of them only one day old. Poor young woman! Full of health and life and expectation one day, and dead the next! It was a grievous misfortune. Strange to say, her money went from them. By some curious and stupid arrangement of those from whom Charlotte had inherited it, it was to go back again at her death if she left no male child. If she had had a little son, it would all have been his.

He was the Rector of Naughton now. A year or two back, the old man had died, and Mr. Gayne was appointed to the living. It was worth about three hundred a year, and the house and garden were good. But, to lose his wife's six hundred pounds of annual income must have been indeed a blow.

I had been to Naughton, and was walking back along the field path, under the shade of the hedge and the overhanging branches of trees. It was sunny August weather. The reapers were tying up the sheaves of corn lower down in the field; harvest that year was late. Richard's eldest son, Dick, an active, troublesome boy of six, was flying about everywhere; up to the unripe blackberries in the hedge, down among the sickles of the reapers. A quick footstep behind caused me to turn; and I saw close upon me, the Reverend Francis Gayne. It was about eight months since his wife died. He shook hands and walked on by my side. In the years gone by we had been just civil to each other, coldly courteous, but never a look or word had recalled the past. What therefore was my astonishment to hear him say what he did say this afternoon!

Will it be believed that he asked me to marry him? Walking by my side, and gazing into my face with the same tender looks as of old, he asked me. I bit my lips in my effort for calmness, wishing I could pitch him over the hedge. Angry, indignant, all the past slight he had contemptuously cast on me and the cruel desertion, all the misery it had brought, rose up in my brain, a vivid picture, and for some moments I suffered him to go on, not knowing how to frame my answer.

"I never loved but you, Mary. Although I married another, I have never loved but you. If——"

"Mr. Gayne!" I quietly interrupted, but my eyes flashing as I believe they had never